

~~X - 6 - 31~~ 1576.  
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OF THE ~~30-18-67~~  
**A R T**  
Both of ~~XXII 30 67~~  
Writing & Judging  
O F  
**HISTORY,**  
WITH  
**REFLECTIONS**  
UPON  
Ancient as well as Modern  
**Historians.**

Shewing  
Through what *Defects* there are so few  
*Good*; and that it is Impossible there  
should be many so much as *Tolerable*.

By the most Learned and Ingenuous  
Jesuit Father *Le-Moyne*.

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T O T H E  
R E A D E R.

**T**HE Translating this Incomparable Discourse out of *French*, is not the Effect of any Criminal, Correspondence with the Enemies of the Present Government; nor will the Buying and Reading it make any one Impeachable upon the Statute, seeing the Importing and Exposing this Rich Cargo to Sale, is only to Benefit and Enrich us, and not to Aid and Abet them.

And as there is nothing of our *English Growth* to be compared to it, so I do not think our Soil or Climate are capable of producing a Commodity of the like Goodness; nor can *France* it self, or those more

A. 2.      Southern.

## *The Preface.*

Southern Nations, which pretend to carry away the Glory of Wit and Judgment from these Northern Kingdoms, Boast of any Production of this Kind that Approacheth, much less Equaleth it. For while both they and we value our selves upon the Advances which have been lately made in divers other Parts of Learning, yet it still continues as a Misfortune entailed both upon them and us, that we neither know how to Write nor to Judge of *History*. And that being one of the most Necessary, as well as of the most Useful and Pleasant Parts of Learning, whatsoever conduceth to the Reforming, Improving and Perfecting of it, cannot miss being both Wellcome and Grateful to the Ingenuous. And it is only to such that this short Discourse is recommended, your *Pedants*, and they whose Upper Rooms are ill furnished, being altogether Ill Qualified to meddle with it.

T H E

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# T H E CONTENTS.

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## Dissertation I.

*Of the Merit of History, and Qualities of an Historian.*

Chap. I. **T**HAT History and Poetry are allied. The Passage that separates them is not long. Why no Man has hitherto passed from one to the other. That one must be a Poet to be an Historian. Page 1

Chap. II. Of the Difficulty of History : The small Number of True Historians. Reflections upon some Moderns. p. 8

Chap. III. France has had many Journals and Memoirs, but not one French History. Judgment upon Commynes, and other Historiographers after him. p. 12

## The Contents.

- Chap. IV. *That History demands length of Time, and great Qualifications. Whether it be necessary that an Historian should be a Statesman and a Soldier ?*  
p. 16
- Chap. V. *Wit is the first Quality of an Historian. Wit is an Universal Disposition. With Wit every Man may be a Statesman. The Error of Cardinal Bentivoglio.*  
p. 20
- Chap. VI. *What ought to be the Wit of an Historian : Its Character, Extention, Faculties and Aids.*  
p. 24
- Chap. VII. *History is an Universal School. The Usefulness of this School. A Theatre for Good Princes, and a Scaffold for the Bad. What are the Advantages the Publick receives from one and the other.*  
p. 28
- Chap. VIII. *Of Shews and Representations, Feasts and other Pleasures, which History affords.*  
p. 33
- Chap. IX. *Of the Wit, Judgment and Disposition required for the Reading of History : Whether Young People are Capable ?*  
p. 36
- Chap. X. *The Particular Regard and Intention must be had in the Reading of History.*  
p. 42

## The Contents.

### Dissertation II.

#### *Of the Nature and Art of History.*

Chap. I. **F***rom whence comes the Name of History, and the Different Kinds.*

P. 47

Chap. II. *The Definition of History given by Vossius, Examined and Refuted.*

P. 50

Chap. III. *The true Definition of History, and its Picture drawn with all its Parts.*

P. 53

Chap. IV. *To what Art History belongs; And what Rank she holds in Learning. The difference between an Historian, Orator and Poet.*

p. 58

Chap. V. *That History has need of an Art to govern her: What are the Functions of this Art. Authors that have writ of it.*

p. 62

---

### Dissertation III.

#### *Of the Parts of History.*

Chap. I. **W***hat are the Parts of History? What Actions ought to be the Matter? The Opinions of the Ancients concerning the Truth of these Actions.*

p. 67

Chap.

## The Contents.

Chap. II. *That Truth ought to be the Principal Care of the Historian: How far this Care obliges him; and what are the Laws.* p. 70

Chap. III. *The Sources by which Falsties enter History; and first of Ignorance: Of the Difficulties in discovering Truth. Ways of Illuding Judgment. An Ancient and Modern Example thereupon.* p. 73

Chap. IV. *What Certainty ought to be expected from History. What Faith given her. The Indulgence to be granted Historians: And the middle way to be held between too Easie and too Curious a Belief.* p. 79

Chap. V. *That the Historian, Curious of Truth, must not trust to Fame. The Character of Fame. Partial Relations less to be relied on. That he ought to be without Passion; as well as Country and Party.* p. 84

Chap. VI. *That nothing ought to enter History but what is great and Illustrious. That Trifling things ought to have no place there.* p. 92

Chap. VII. *That Military Actions are not the Principal Matter of History. The Historian ought to be oftner in the Closet than Army. That he ought to shun the Assertion of Marvelous things; and abstain as much from Defect as Excess, in the Relation of Miracles.* p. 96

Chap.

## The Contents.

Chap. VIII. *Whether Private Actions may be made-use of in History? And what ought to be those received.* p. 104

Chap. 9. *Whether the Law of Truth obliges the Historian to keep nothing to himself? Whether nothing be owing to the Publick Vertue and Good Example? Whether 'tis not better to suppress the Vices of the Great, than publish them.* p. 106

Chap. X. *That the Right of History permits the Historian all sorts of Truth. The Rules to be observed in the use of this Right; with Conscience and Honour, and without Scandal and Prejudice to the Publick Vertue.* p. 111

---

## Dissertation IV.

Chap. I. **T***hat the Historian has right to judge of Things and Actions. Of the Faults he must avoid in the use of this Right. And first of Rashness.* p. 117

Chap. II. *Of Malice in Judging the Frailty of all Men. The Care an Historian ought to take to preserve himself from it. Of the Brevity required. Reflections upon Philip Commynes.* p. 123

Chap. III. *The Regard an Historian ought to have to his Birth, Religion and Life.* p. 126

Chap.



## The Contents.

- Chap. IV. *Of Elogies and Characters of  
Illustrious Persons; in what places they  
ought to be put.* p. 130
- 

## Dissertation V. Of Sentences.

- Chap. I. **T***hat History demands Sen-  
tences. What are Sentences  
and the Kinds.* p. 134
- Chap. II. *Of the Use of Sentences. And  
the Rules to be observed.* p. 139
- Chap. III. *Another Important Rule to be  
observed in the Use of Sentences, to the  
Exclusion of Points contrary to the Gra-  
vity of History. Seneca wrongfully cen-  
sured for that by Quintilian.* p. 144
- Chap. IV. *That a Point in Thoughts is dif-  
ferent from Force. An Example of the  
Force of Thoughts, of Instructions and  
Precepts, and how to be used.* p. 147
- 

## Dissertation VI. Of Descriptions.

- Chap. I. **O***f the Worth of Descriptions.  
And some Rules the Histo-  
rian ought to observe.* p. 152
- Chap. II. *Other Rules for Descriptions.  
Ovid censured. And of some Historians  
that have failed in those Rules.* p. 156
- Chap.

## The Contents.

- Chap. III. *Other Rules necessary in Descriptions. How and to what Degree they ought to approach Poetry. Apuleius censured and his Stile.* p. 160
- Chap. IV. *The last Rule in Descriptions, and its Importance.* p. 163
- 

## Dissertation VII.

### Of Harangues and Digressions.

- Chap. I. **W** *Hether Harangues are Superfluous in History. And whether contrary to the Rule of Truth.* p. 166
- Chap. II. *That Harangues are necessary in History, not contrary to Truth nor Probability. Historians and Poets justified thereupon.* p. 169
- Chap. III. *What Persons ought to Harangue. What ought to be the Subject, Matter and Measure of Harangues. Thucydides and Salust reprehended for having failed in this Rule.* p. 176
- Chap. IV. *Of the Kinds, Use and End of Digressions.* p. 183

Disserta-

## The Contents.

### Dissertation VIII.

#### Of Order.

- Chap. I. **O**F the Preface. Rules to be observed, and Faults to be avoided. Reflections upon the Prefaces of Salust. p. 187
- Chap. II. The Historick Narration requires Order. What is this Order, and how it differs from that of Poetry. p. 194
- 

### Dissertation IX.

#### Of the Stile of History.

- Chap. I. **T**HE Stile of History demands Ornament. p. 200
- Chap. II. What ought to be the Ornament of the Stile of History, and in what it consists. p. 203
- Chap. III. That the Sublime Character is the most proper for the Stile of History. p. 205
- Chap. IV. That the Stile of History ought to approach that of Poetry, and to what Degree. p. 209
- Chap. V. The Historick Stile demands Pureness and Clearness. p. 213
- Chap. V. That the Stile of History demands Brevity, and in what it ought to consist. p. 219

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O F  
HISTORY.

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Dissertation I.

*Of the Merit of History, and  
Qualities of an Historian.*

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C H A P. I.

*That History and Poetry are allied ;  
The Passage that separates them is  
not long. Why no Man has hitherto  
passed from one to the other. That  
one must be a Poet to be an Histo-  
rian.*

**I** Know not but this Enterprize  
I have undertaken, of passing  
from *Poetry* to *History*, may  
be accused of Presumption or Infi-  
delity

delity to the *Muses*. They may say I have done enough to follow *Homer* and *Virgil*, without endeavouring after *Thucydides* and *Livy*: And that *Heroick Poetry* being the greatest Effort of *Wit*, and the just Measure of Humane Life, I might have spared my self the *Fatigue* of a second Career, and reposed where the two greatest Men of the World have fate down. They may yet add, That having been hitherto well treated by the *Muses*, I ought to have been Faithful to the end, and not occasion'd them the Grief of seeing themselves abandon'd by me, after so many Graces receiv'd from them.

I confess the *Race* of *Poets* and that of *Historians* are different; and that not one having ever yet attempted to change, I ought to fear hazarding my self first in the Journey. Nevertheless having with Care discovered the Passage, I have neither found it so Long, nor so Painful, as many imagine not knowing the Country, but by ill

Maps,

say *Maps*, and false Representations  
 Ho- made of it. There are no Forts  
 dea- to take, no Rocks nor Precipices  
 vy: to go over; the descent is almost  
 the Insensible by which you may pass  
 just from one to the other.

ght 'Tis true no body has hitherto  
 of undertaken it; and to speak *Poeti-*  
 sed cally when we are treating of *Prose*,  
 the *Homer*, *Virgil* and *Tasso*, satisfied  
 may with the first Rank they hold on  
 erto this side of *Parnassus*, either had  
 ght not leasure, or would not give  
 end themselves the trouble of crossing  
 rief over to that of the *Historians*. And  
 by what I say of those, may be said  
 iv'd of *Thucydides*, *Tacitus* and *Livy*, &c.  
 who have abstained through Weari-  
 and ness, or other Considerations.

an b I find enough of leasure to ven-  
 at- ture upon it, and I owe this lea-  
 to- sure partly to my *Condition*, that  
 the places me in an equal distance from  
 with doing nothing, or nothing to the  
 ave purpose; and partly to my *Consti-*  
 fo- tution, that Nourishes it self by  
 not Labour, and is Enlightned by Mo-  
 ill tion, as the Fire and Stars. And



what I say of Leasure arising from Labour is not strange, seeing those that work continually lengthen and multiply their Days; and by the same reason, according to *Seneca*, the Idle shorten and diminish their Number. And it happens to me in this, as to those that make of a well manag'd *Mediocrity*, an undecaying *Fund*; in the place that the bad employ of *Abundance*, is a cause of Perpetual *Want* to the Rich Prodigals.

As to my Infidelity to the *Muses*, 'tis not so great as those may imagine that are Ignorant. *History* is one of them, the most Noble, and I believe the *oldest* of all the *Troop*. Not only because *Fable* succeeded *Truth*, and *Musick Speech*; but because the World was acquainted with *Histories* before *Poems*; and *Homer's Iliads*, as every Body knows, are only a *Copy* in *Verse*, made of what *Datis* and *Diētis* have written in *Prose* of the *Wars* of *Troy*. I may add, That Antiquity having given the Names of the *Nine Muses*  
to



to the Books of *Herodotus*, *History* was willing by that to make the World understand, that *History* was of the same *Family*; or that the *Muses* labour not less with the *Historians* than the *Poets*. And *Dion. Halicar.* says, That of all the *Muses*, there is not one that resembles that of *Homer's*, and approaches nearer than that of *Herodotus*. A great deal more may be said for my change. *History*, if we believe *Cicero*, is but a *Poem* without the Slavery of *Dress*, without Ceremony and Constraint. The *Poetick Muse* has therefore no reason to complain of my Inconstancy, or to esteem me Disloyal, if I serve her in her days of Liberty, after having serv'd her in her days of Confinement.

It may likewise be said with Confidence, upon the resemblance remarked by the *Criticks* between *History* and *Poetry*, that a Man must be a *Poet* to be an *Historian*. I do not say *Historian* after the manner of the Makers of *Legends*

and *Chronicles*; the Remassers of *Journals* and *Gazettes*; nor of those Gentlemen *Historiographers* who are perpetual Compilers, and think to have well deserv'd a *Pension*, when they have joyn'd together a parce of Scraps, stollen from *Froissard*, *Nicholas Gill*, *du Hallin*, &c. and exposed them with a little Disguisement for their own. I say *Historians* of the Rank of *Salust*, *Livy* and *Tacitus*, that have been *Poets*, free and disingaged from the Constraint of *Numbers* and *Measure* as *Pontin* has made appear, by confronting their *Figures* and *manner* of *Speech* with those of *Virgil*. Upon which we must not forget the Testimony of *Lucian* a great Master in the *Art* of *History*, who says, the *Vessel* would be *Sluggish*, and without Movement, if the *Wind* of *Poetry* did not fill the Sails.

Upon this and the Faith of *Quintilian* and *Cicero*, who have often affirmed, that *History* is a *Poem* free from the *Servitude* of *Verse*; I thought if I have had any Fancy

in *Poetry*, I could not better im-  
 ploy what remains of my time,  
 than in the Composition of a *Hi-*  
*story*. And as when I began my  
*Heroick Poem*, not to work Tumul-  
 tuously and at all Adventures; I  
 made to my self a *Model*, where I  
 abridged all the *Rules* belonging to  
 that *Art*, till that time a Stranger  
 to *France*: So now undertaking to  
 compile a *History*, which is one of  
 the greatest and most useful Pro-  
 ductions of Humane Wit, I ought  
 to renew my Acquaintance with  
 the *Historians*, and instruct my self  
 more particularly with the Nature,  
 Parts and Quality of *History*; That  
 having both *Patrons* and *Rules* be-  
 fore my Eyes, it may not happen  
 to me as to an Ignorant *Architect*,  
 who regarding neither *Proportion*  
 nor *Symmetry*, in lieu of a *Palace*  
 raises only *Irregular Heaps* of Stone  
 and Marble. To this end I have  
 reduced into this Work all I could  
 learn of the *Oeconomy* of *History*,  
 whether by my own *Observations*,  
 or those of others, either better

enlightned, or less imploy'd than my self. It may happen Improvement may be made upon what I have done, yet this will still be my Glory; to have first taught *France* the *Art* of *Poem*, the *Art* of *Device*, and the *Art* of *History*.

---

## C H A P. II.

*Of the Difficulty of History: The Small Number of True Historians: Reflections upon some Moderns.*

**I**T is no easie Burden to undertake compiling a *History*: The *Ancient Greeks*, and after them the *Latins*, that have known the Weight, have called it the great Work. And all, that a desire of present Fame, and of leaving some Remembrance to Posterity, has press'd on to this Labour, would have done wisely to have taken the Council of *Horace* to the Poets, *First to have tried their Strength.*

The

The Difficulty of the Work appears enough, in the small Number of those that have set their Hands to it with Success. Greece that prided it self as the *Mother of Arts*, cannot reckon above *two or three*, and those lived together in the same Age. After those this Fertile Mother produced great Bodies indeed, but rude and unformed. Ancient Rome had but *four*, she began with *Salust*, and ended with *Tacitus* or *Quintus Curtius*. *Lucius*, who was so much esteemed by *Cicero*, not being known by us, it may be said for his own Unhappiness, and that of the Republick of Learning, that he died twice, once Naturally, and again in his Work. I mention not *Cesar*, his *Commentaries* contain excellent Matter, but half wrought, and that never raises an Edifice. There is no less to be said for *Paterculus* and *Florus*, the most Polite and Gallant Writers of their Age; but Polite and Gallant *Abbreviators*, whose Works, full of Wit, cannot be better compar'd than to a

*Plain*, in which the *Architects* describe a *Building* by *Lines* and *Points*.

*Italy* since that time becoming *Gothick* by the Fall of the *Empire*, and Banishment of the *Muses*, has produced no regular *Historian* till *Guicciardin*; who may be readily likened to such Bodies as have much *Flesh* and few *Nerves*, and seem animated in some parts, and at some certain times. *Davila* that succeeded a great while after him, and *Bentivoglio* since, exceedingly precede him, and are Superior in every thing. If I may be permitted to add our *Maffeus* and *Strada*, who have writ in *Latin*, and in the Stile of the Ancient *Republick*; the first the *History* of the *Indies*, the later that of the *Civil Wars* of *Flanders*. 'Twas their Misfortune to be born Fifteen hundred Years after *Tacitus* and *Livy*, otherwise they had been esteem'd with them, and had had together their *Commentators* and *Commentaries*. I may make the same Complaint for our *Mariana*, who is the only regular



gular *Historian* that *Spain* can boast of: Had he liv'd in the time of *Augustus*, he had lodg'd in his Palace, and had had the same Treatment at his Table, as *Timagenes* that Satyrical and Biting Historian. *Grotius*, to joyn a *Hollander* with a *Spaniard*, is the only Historian of this Method we have had in the North; but this Method is much spoil'd by an affected and embarrassed Shortness, by which he would appear more *Salust*, and more *Tacitus*, than themselves. His *Stile*, that imitates first *one*, then the *other*, keeps an equal distance from *both*; and not approaching near enough to comprehend their *Vertues*, falls into their *Vices*.



## C H A P. III.

France *has had many Journals and Memoirs, but not one French History. Judgment upon Commynes, and other Historiographers after him.*

**I**F we may credit St. Jerom, *France* has always been renown'd for its Eloquence : And notwithstanding the Shame, it must be said, That amongst so much *Eloquence*, and so many *Learned Men*, it cannot to this time boast of one *regular Historian* : I don't say in *Latin*, but in the *French Language*. And I make this distinction, because the *French* that have written in *Latin*, have in some manner estranged themselves from their own Country. This without Prejudice to the Memory of *Monfieur de Thou*, whose Reputation is rather founded upon the *Bulk*, than *Merit* of his Work. And since we are like to have suddenly a *Latin History* of *Monfieur*

Monſieur *de la Borda*, our *Saluſt* or *Tacitus*, it will be lawful for him to adapt himſelf to which he pleaſes, perhaps both may be deſirous of him, and no doubt but he will do Honour to the one or the other. But I return to my Proposition, That to this time we have not had one *Historian* in our *Language*, that could be eſteem'd perfect. We have been very *Prolifick* in *Journals*, *Gazettes* and *Memoirs*: We are ſtored with enough to make an Illuſtrious Library, where you will ſee nothing but Dukes, Peers, Mareſchals of *France*, and Generals of Armies, bound in Spaniſh Skins, and rang'd upon Shelves of Cedar.

But if the *Commentaries* of *Caſar*, which are ſo *Polite*, ſo *Adviſed*, ſo *Modeſt*, cannot obtain for him the name of an *Historian*, can we believe that *Beleagnangis*, *Montluc*, the Duke *de Nevers*, the Sieurs *Caſtelneau*, *de Tavannes*, or *Suille*, have any Right to pretend to it, under the Title of their *Memoirs*. I would willingly place by themſelves thoſe attri-

attributed to the Duke of *Guise*, and Monsieur the Duke of *Roche-foucault*, because few Essentials are wanting to the Form of a Regular History. But notwithstanding they have writ with so much Judgment, and so good Language, with those Defects they cannot take it ill we do not violate a Rule that we have not yet intrench'd upon to serve the *first Caesar*, who was at least as gallant a Man as themselves.

There remains but *Philip Communes*, and it may be said I ought not to treat him with greater Rigor than *Justus Lipsius* has done, who has given him so honourable a place amongst the *Historians* very near *Polybius*. 'Tis very true that *Communes* has great Dispositions towards an *Historian* of the first Rank: He is Sincere, Judicious, and Instructive: His Reflections, Sentences, Instructions, and Digressions, come from a finish'd Wisdom, and perfect Politick; but having had no other *Master* than his own  
*Genius*;

*Genius*; no other Rule, no other Models than his own Judgment; he could mount no higher at most, than an Essay or rough Draught of History. But yet this Essay receives Admission into the Cabinets of wise Princes, above all that Art and Nature has there amassed of Rich and Curious.

Upon this Retrenchment of *Historians*, what will become of our *Historiographers*; And what will be the Rank and Employ given them by *Boccalin* in his Kingdom of *Parnassus*? *Dupleix* will continue to draw up Petitions against the Innovations in our Language; and at his hours of leasure will correct his History, from the Remarks made by the *Mareschal de Bassompierre*. *Matthieu* will learn to fasten his Conceits, that fall to pieces in every Line. *De Serres*, and the other Forgers of Calumnies and Impostures against the Court of *Rome*, the Popes, Kings, Ecclesiasticks and Jesuits, that they have not known but by the false Resemblances made  
at

at *Geneva* and *Amsterdam*, will be tied to a corner with *Diogenes's* Dog, where they will have nothing to gnaw upon, but the Stones thrown by Passengers to teach them no more to bite.

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#### C H A P. IV.

*That History demands length of Time, and great Qualifications. Whether it be necessary an Historian should be a Statesman and a Soldier?*

**T**HIS Rarity then of a True *History* and Perfect *Historian*, proceeds either from length of Time, that so great a Work requires, or from the excellent Qualities in the Workman to succeed in his Design. A *Picture* may be made in a Day, a *Figure* of Wax in few Hours, and a *Gazette* in a Morning: But to Paint a *Gallery* of the Extension of the *Louvre*; to  
Carve

Carve a *Statue* of the Greatness of the *Hercules* of *Farnese*, the *Collossus* of *Rhodes*, or that of *Stasirates*, to be cut out of a Mountain; and to compose a Just History, whether of one Reign or more, the longest Lives are but long enough. As for the Ancients, *Paul Emilius* spent Thirty Years in composing what he has left us; and *Paulus Jovius* Thirty seven in his; and yet neither one nor the other of any great bulk. And 'twill not be wondred at by those that know *Virgil* was Twelve Years in finishing what may be read in so many Hours. But in such things 'tis not the *Mass*, but the *Judgment* and *Wit* that cost the Pains. And three or four drops of that Spirit well purified, and such as we find in one Line of *Salust* or *Tacitus*, are worth more than those gross Volumes under which we see the Ware-houses and Families of Booksellers to groan.

As to the Qualities necessary for an Historian; *Lucian* would have him have a Prudence begun by  
*Study,*



*Study*, and finished by some *publick Ministry*; and not only a *Minister of State* but a *great Commander*. If this were true, none but *Princes*, *Ambassadors*, and *great Generals*, should have dar'd to set their Hands to the Work. But *Lucian* requires too much; for besides that ordinarily, the *Action* requires one thing, and the *Composition* another: That *Experience* that makes the *Wise*, makes them not always *Eloquent*; and that 'tis *Extraordinary* to find a *good Soldier* a *Man of his Pen*, who receives without *Caution* what his *Prince* or *General* says of himself. It is not true, that an *Historian* must be a *Minister of State* and *Great Commander*. *Herodotus*, that *Cicero* calls the *Father of History*, notwithstanding the *Envy* of *Plutarch*, was never *Officer*, nor *Minister of State*. *Salust*, that with some has the first place amongst the *Latin Historians*, reprov'd of *Luxury* in the *Senate*, and accus'd of *Scandalous Debauches* before the *Prator*, employ'd himself in other  
Matters



Matters than those of the Republick. And we never read that *Livy* was ever Counsellor to *Augustus* with *Mecenas*, or Captain with *Agrippa*.

If the Necessity of writing *Military Action*, obliged an *Historian* to be a *Man of the Sword*, the same Obligation would lie upon the *Undertakers* of an *Heroick Poem*, who are so full of *Combats* in their Heads, and which they transfer upon Paper. But you will agree with me, the *Lawrels of Victory* are not the same, nor do they grow under the same *Constellation* with those of *Poetry*; and that to this time we have not seen them flourish together. To pass by *Homer*, who could be no redoubtable Warrior, being blind as he was; 'tis said of *Anacreon* he was both. I know not whether he was so Valiant at his Sword as his Pots; but we very well know his *Muse* accustomed to the *Debauch*, wanted Breath for the *Heroick Trumpet*, and afforded him  
little

little more than Drinking-Songs,  
and Love-Toys.

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# C H A P. V.

*Wit is the first Quality of an Historian. Wit is an Universal Disposition. With Wit every Man may be a Statesman. The Error of Cardinal Bentivoglio.*

**B**Eing a *Soldier* then is as little necessary for an *Historian* as for a *Poet*; but to be either, 'tis necessary to be a Man of *Wit*. *Wit* is an Universal Disposition to all *Forms*; to Philosophy, Poetry, to Civil and Military Science; makes a Statesman, and makes a Warrior, a Man of his Pen and a Man of his Sword. With this *Lucullus*, after he had laid aside the long Robe, became a great Captain. With *Wit*, *Homer*, *Virgil* and *Tasso* have represented feign'd Wars and Heroes, that have serv'd as Models and Spurs to the True.

An

gs, An Historian must then have *Wit*, but not a *Wit* of no larger Extension than a Song or Elegy. I say an unbounded Spirit, that raises it self above Crowns and Crown'd Heads; that comprehends States and Empires; that is Popular in a Republick, Monarchick in a Monarchy; that has receiv'd of Nature, at least in Disposition and unpolish'd, all the Forms of Politicks. With one Ray of this Spirit, without having steer'd the Helm, he is able to represent the Good and Evil Forms of Government; the Faults and Vertues of Ministers, without having had part with them; and without being call'd to the Councils of Princes, without being found amongst their Troops, although of a Profession estranged from Courts and Armies, he is able to instruct Princes and Generals for the time to come, by the Examples of times past.

All this is said with Submission to Cardinal *Bentivoglio*, and with respect to his Purple and Merit.

He

He finds Objections against the Reflections and Politicks in the History of Father *Strada*, and maintains, That a Man brought up a Stranger to the Court, and as it were out of the world, cannot with good Judgment make so publick a Profession of the Science of both. Some think it not strange the *Cardinal Historian* meeting the *Jesuit* in the same *Carreer*, Emulation should draw from his Pen some strokes, not altogether so Advantageous for his Competitor. But I am not of their Opinion, as thinking it enough to look for Jealousie amongst Artisans and Shop-keepers, without a Supposition of finding it in the Cabinets of Learned Men. However it was, to say nothing of *Plato* and *Aristotle* who had nothing to do with Government, and yet have writ so well of a *Commonwealth*; according to this new *Maxim* of the *Cardinal's*, the Institution of a Prince compos'd by *St. Thomas*, so estrang'd from a *Court* both by his Profession and manner of Life, must be then a kind of Madness: And *Justus Lipsius*

*Lipsius* that lived in the World without having to do with it, yet in his Learned Works has abridg'd all that appertains to the Knowledge of it, has left us only a lasting Absurdity. Let us know then that a good Wit and good Judgment, aided by Reading and Meditation, without a Bishoprick or Office in the Court of *Rome*, of a simple Religious, may make an excellent Politician: And why not after having made of Cardinal *Bentivoglio* a *Warring Historian*, notwithstanding his long Robe and Priesthood. The distance is not greater between a Religious and a Politick, than a Cardinal and a Captain. And 'tis not to be believ'd, that the Pen of a Sacred Hand can commit an Irregularity in expressing the Thoughts and Dogmes of Policy, and be free from it in rehearsing of Battles and Murders.

## C H A P. VI.

*What ought to be the Wit of an Historian : Its Character, Extension, Faculties and Aids.*

**H**itherto occasionally of the *Spirit* requisite for a perfect *Historian* : But to finish my *Character*, This *Wit* must not be of those Superficials that only Surprise ; make a Flash and away ; of those Quintessences that evaporate upon taking Air ; of those *Pointillens* that bend and break with the least resistance of Affairs ; of those Journalists that are sometimes clear and sometimes obscure. An Historian being to determine of Things and Persons, requires a clear Judgment to distinguish the True from the False : Must be equitable to do every one Justice : Moderate not to carry his Thoughts and Expressions beyond his Matter. In fine, penetrating and solid, able to enter without losing himself, into the  
very



very Foundations ; and discover all the Mysteries of Affairs.

This is a great deal, and yet there is more ; the *Spirit* required for an *Historian* (to leave nothing unsaid) must not be of those *Wits* that one may compare to the Rich Covetous, that keep all upon their Register and in their Coffers ; or of those hoarse Musicians, that as one of the Ancients says, Sing only to themselves and their Muse : He must not only be Rich within, with his Notions and Thoughts ; his Riches must appear, and Eloquence give Eclat and Magnificence to his words.

If *History* was shut up in a Mans Breast, and consisted, according to the Opinion of *Vossius*, but in the simple Memory of things, there would be neither occasion for Words or Writing : And a *Barbarian* that had the use of no Language, might proceed *Historian*, by the sole Knowledge of Affairs passed in his time. *History*, as I have said, is of the

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*Family* of the Muses, where there is nothing *Hoarse* or *Mute*: Harmony and Eloquence reign amongst them, as in the Waters of Fountains and Leaves of Trees. 'Tis then necessary that an Historian should be *Eloquent* either *Naturally* or by *Study*, and hereafter I will shew what ought to be the *Character* of his *Eloquence*.

These interior *Faculties* proper to an *Historian*, must be supported from without, to the end, in the School-mens *Dialect*, they may pass from Power to Act: And because his *Office* is *Reporter* and *Witness*, it were to be wish'd it might be from his own *View*; but since Nature cannot permit a Man to live twice, or more than in one Age, it must at least be prop'd by the *Testimony* of those that have *seen* the things they recount; or have *learn'd* them from those People that have lived in that time; where these Aids are wanting, he must have recourse to *Relations* and *Memoirs*,

*moirs*, which hold the place of *Witnesses*, but those well chose, Faithful, Authorised, and free from Partiality.

But if *History* be a Work of so great Weight, and so Difficult? If so many *Qualities* are necessary in an *Historian*, to come off with Success; What shall I return to those that may demand if I find these Qualifications in my self? To which *first* I answer, Till this time I have had no occasion to enquire; and if I have found any of them, I ought to put them in use. And *Secondly*, In the Picture I have drawn, I have not represented my self such as I am, but such as I ought to be. That this is the *Portrait* of an *Historian* that has never yet been, nor will not arrive but with the perfect Prince, and perfect Captain, the World has waited for so many Ages. And that the same Respect that obliged me to undertake composing an *Heraick Poem*, has now engaged me to that

of an *History*, where the *Hero* may be found not in Imaginations and Semblances of Truth, but in Effects True and Solid.

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## C H A P. VII.

*History is an Universal School: The Usefulness of this School. A Theatre for Good Princes, and a Scaffold for the Bad. What are the Advantages the Publick receives from one and the other.*

AND since it may be here necessary to declare my self, I protest 'twas the Publick Benefit I considered, when I undertook this Work, as believing I could not render my Studies more Useful, nor better employ my last Years, than in setting out an *History*, which according to the Description of Cicero, *Is the Director of Manners, and the Mistress of Life.* A Noble

Noble and Excellent *Mistress*, that has kept *School* open to so many Nations for so many Ages; a *School* of all Languages, where the *Persians*, the *Greeks*, the *Romans*, have heretofore Studied; the *French*, *Spaniards*, *Italians* and *Germans*, Study at present: Where the *Living* that would be *Wise* are the *Scholars*; where the *Dead*, as well the *Wise* as the *Fools*, are the *Books* and *Lessons*, where we learn not to turn a Verse, measure a Period, or form a Syllogism; but to do Acts of Justice, Courage and Mercy; and in the place of *Declamators* and *Sophists*, that are made with great Labour and Charge in other *Schools*; here without Charge, without Pains, *Princes* are taught to be *Just* and *Moderate*; *Ministers* *Intelligent* and *Faithful*; *Captains* *Wise* before their time, and *Expert* without the *Assistance* of *Experience*.

In this consists the principal *End* of *History*, and ought to be the first *Design* of an Historian. He

must leave to the Inventors of *Romances*, those Paper-Combatants, to Amuse the Idle Youth with Representations of feigned Wars and imagined Loves. Kings, Princes, Emperors, Ministers of State, and Generals, are to be his *Spectators*; and the *Scenes* must be adapted to the Presence. And since *History* is a *Philosophy* purified from the *Pedantry* of the *Schools*, free from the Embarrassments of Divisions and Arguments, and reduced into Action and Example; his Office is to represent his *Matter* founded upon *Truth*; to conduct their *Will* by their *Memory*; to reform and render perfect the *Modern* by the *Ancient*, the present by the past. And the Happiness of a People consisting in the good Instructions given those that govern, that ought to be the chief end of his Labour.

And for that reason it is, that *History* is called the *Philosophy* of *Princes*, their Governour and Counsellor in their mature Age, their Adviser



Adviser in their Cabinets and Armies. For that reason the Emperor *Basil*, in his Book of Instructions to his Son *Leon*, recommends History as a way of *Travelling* without *Fatigue*; as an advanced Experience, as an easie way to enrich himself by the Labours of others; to instruct and form himself by the Examples as well of the Bad as the Good; to recall back past Ages, and to extend his Life to the *beginning* by his *Memory*.

But let us not esteem *History* only as a *Counsellor* to Kings and Princes; she is also their *Judge* notwithstanding the *Sovereignty* of which they so much boast themselves. And as she has *Theatres* and *Thrones*, where she *Crowns* the *Vertuous*; she has likewise *Scaffolds* and *Wheels*, where the *Vicious* suffer the *Punishment* due to their *Crimes* in the Eyes of all People to all *Posterity*. Their Guards are of no Defence; their Crowns and Purple put them not in Covert; their

Memories expos'd, their Ghosts torn in pieces, produce at least this Good after so many Ills, they make others fear the like Torment, whose evil Genius has thrown upon the like Conduct.

And here let us not forget the Remark made by *Tacitus*, that *History* is of great use, if it were but for shewing the *Rod* to *Tyrants*, and advertising them of the Punishment she prepares. And 'tis certain, whatever is said of their Secret Disquietudes, and inward Pangs, their future *Fame* keeps them more in awe than their *Conscience*. The most part of them believing no other Eternity than that of History; and in the height of their Enjoyments, they cannot but think with Confusion, what she will one day *say*, of what they now *Act* without Shame.

## C H A P. VIII.

*Of Shews and Representation, Feasts  
and other Pleasures which History  
affords.*

BESIDES these general Advantages the *Publick* receives by *History*, there are others less common for *Particulars*, who know how to profit by them. She there shews the Turns and Revolutions of this *Globe* called the World; the Rise and Fall of States and Empires; the Inequality and Inconstancy of Fortune that governs it. Sometimes she represents a *Comedy*, at others a *Tragedy*, according to the different Event of things in the several *Courts* where she makes her *Theatre*. And from these diverse Representations, they may learn not to rest too much upon the Favours of Fortune, or expect to be ever able to clog her *Wheel*; to be ready to

mount or descend when she pleases; to render their Souls immoveable and always equal amidst these Vicissitudes; and review the several Portraits she makes them, as for many Counsellors and Guides to the way of Vertue.

Let us not then perswade ourselves, the Advantages that accrue from *History*, are Fruits of a bitter or insipid Nature: The most delicious Tables of Antiquity, whether those of *Cleopatra* or *Apicius*, where whole Provinces and Patrimonies were eaten in *Ragousts*; or those of *Nero*, prepared by the most Ingenious and most finished Debauches, in a Court the most loose and Luxurious the World ever knew, had nothing so Delicious as the *Tables* of *History*. We see not there the *Gladiators* Combating and Defiling the Meats with their Blood, for the Divertisement of the Company; but the Combats of Vertue and Fortune; Victories obtain'd by Patience and Prudence, over Suffer-

Sufferings and Dangers. We see there, without Hazard or engaged Spirit, the Defeats of Armies, wracking of Fleets, Seditions of Countries, and Ruin of Towns; and if the Pleasure of *Shews* have been always so much esteem'd, that heretofore the Governing People have left the Care of Affairs for the Divertisement of the Theatre, and rather consented to the Ruin of *Six Provinces* than that of the Cirque: What must be the Pleasure of a Man that *Travels* in his *Chair* through all Ages, through all Countries; That without *leaving* his *Closet*, *assists* in all *Reigns* at the *Councils* of all *Kings*, finds himself *present* at their *Combats* by Sea and Land; and makes himself by interressing sometimes his Joy and sometimes his Grief, *Assyrian* at *Babylon*, *Lacedemonian* at *Sparta*, and *Roman* at *Rome*. There are so many Charms in this Pleasure, the Sad lose their Grief; and oftentimes the Sick their Maladies: As it hapned  
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to *Alphonfus* King of *Arragon*, who given over by Physicians, after having drein'd unsuccessfully the Apothecaries Shops, found in *Quintus Curtius* the Health he had in vain search'd for in the Schools of *Galen* and *Hippocrates*.

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## C H A P. IX.

*Of the Wit, Judgment and Disposition required for the reading of History: Whether Young People are capable?*

**A**FTER so many things of the Merit of History, and Qualities of an Historian; something must be said of the Disposition required in the Readers. And some would have them of a Maturity above the Flower of their Age, founded upon what *Aristotle* says, Not to admit Youth to the Study of Civil Sciences: But either they

take

take him in a wrong Sence, or place his words where they don't belong.

'Tis true that *Civil Science* and *History* tend both equally to *Prudence*, which is the common Intention of one and the other: But the ways to arrive at this end are very different; The *one* goes through Definitions, Divisions, exalted Discourses, universal Axioms, and Syllogifms in form, which are every way abstracted from Sight, and far from the Paths open to Sense and Imagination. The *other*, without rising to Universals and Ideas, without leaving *Singulars* and *Sensibles*, proceed plainly by *Examples* that lead straight and without by-ways to Use and Practice. I confess, *Youth* accusom'd to things address'd to their Sense and Imagination, enter but with Difficulty into the ways of Science; and if some enter through strength of *Wit*, they find themselves immediately as it were lost in the Country.

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The Lines, the Circles, the Triangles, that sustains and guides them in *Geometry* fail them there, they know not where to go, what way to take: But I know nothing can hinder their following the Method of *History*, where all is Sensible and Solid; where, without amazing themselves in the *Labyrinth* of *Speculation*, and *Chaos* of *Idea's*, they may learn by what has been done, what to avoid; in which consists the principal Function of Prudence.

This in answer to those who do Violence to old *Aristotle*, and force him to their side against his Will. What he has said of *Dogmatical Methods* that are long oblique and embarrassed, cannot be affirmed of *Examples* that are short, straight and clear. And although we grant History may not be so good a Mistress of Prudence to *Young People* in general; and that they are not capable of making so good Profit in addressing her as to Philosophy;  
*Polybius*

*Polybius* and *Livy* would teach them more and lead them further in one day, than the *Expositors* of *Plato* and *Aristotle*, and all the *Disciples* of *Zeno* and *Cleanthes* are able to do in a Month. And three or four such Examples as *Joseph* in Prison, Victorious *Scipio*, and disfigured *Spurina*, would perswade them more of the Merit and Value of *Continence*, than what has ever been said of it in the *Academy* or *Lyceum*.

We may see then *Youth* prevents not the Advantages may be made by *History*, if the Maturity of the Judgment supplies the Defect of Years. But the most part of those that apply themselves to this kind of reading, either want the Judgment she requires, or make not use of it as they ought; and that in default of knowing what is the end of *History*, why she is made publick, and of what use in a Civil Life; from whence arrives that in lieu of regarding her as a *School* of  
Vertue,

*Vertue*, and *Academy of Wisdom*, where there are disinterested *Masters* that teach without Wages, without Sallary, who give Lessons night and day to all that understand to read: The *one* regards her as a *Theatre*, where she represents sometimes Comical sometimes Tragical Actions: Others as a *Cirque*, where is seen the Courfing of Horses and Clashing of *Gladiators*: Others as a *Fair*, where all sorts of *Antick Statues* and *Pictures* are exposed. And upon the false Judgment all these People make of her, *one* searches Sleep in a quarter of an hours Discourse with *Xenophon*; another pleases himself with seeing the *Romans* bleed in the Battel of *Canae*, or that of *Trasymene*; a third, curious of Rarities esteem'd by Pedants, finds wherewithall to fill his Memory with Observations upon the *Serpent-Father* of *Alexander*, the *Wolf-nourisher* of *Romulus*, the *Eternal Fire* of the Kings of *Persia*, and that of the *Vestal Virgins*; upon the

Head-



*Head-Dressings* of the *Grecian Dames*, and the *Feet* of the *Romans*; upon the *Doves* that fed *Semiramis*, and the *Viper* that stung *Cleopatra*; and a hundred such things that are of no use. And amongst so many that have Libraries full of *Historians*, there is scarce one endeavours to improve his Honour, or render himself more Vertuous.

Let them know then, that *History* demands another *Disposition* than such People bring with them. And since she is (as the Wise say) the *Directress* of *Manners*, and *Mistress* of *Life*, they must be perswaded not to lose time with her, to bring another Spirit, other regards, and give another sort of Attention than to a *Comedian*. The first and principle Intention of those that present themselves, must be to be govern'd and conducted by the Examples she proposeth. All the great Men have made this use of her, they regarded her, according to *Plutarch*, as a Looking-glass before

before which they adjusted and embellish'd their Lives by the Vertues of others. And *Cicero* confesses he studied in History the Portraitsures of Wise Men who had been before him, to imprint in himself their Resemblance as much as 'twas possible.

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### C H A P. X.

*The particular Regard and Intention must be had in the reading of History.*

**F**ROM this general *Intention* of *History*, we must descend to particular Applications. And since *History* is as a Palace or Temple enrich'd with all sorts of Pictures, the Sight must not be cast here and there at random and without design; every one must make choise of Models that he finds proper for his Quality, Age, Temperament, Fortune and Affairs.

A Prince that makes the *Lives* of Princes his Study, may equally advantage himself by the *Bad* as the *Good*: From some that he sees crown'd with Glory, and adored by Nations; he may learn Piety, Justice, Mercy and Love to his People. From others that he sees Confounded, Asham'd, accompanied with Infamy, a Vail upon their Faces, followed with Despair, a Poniard in one Hand, a Cord in the other; he may learn to fly Impiety, Covetousness, Luxury, Ravage, Cruelty, and such like Pests that make Tyrannick Reigns, and Tyrants Miserable.

A Statesman likewise, who sees on one side the Portraiture of *Joseph* and *Moses*, opposed to *Achitophel* and *Haman*, on the other the Pictures of *Agrippa* and *Mecenas*, opposite to *Sejanus* and *Tigillinus*, may draw *Lights* from the one, and *Shadows* from the other, wherewith to imbelish his *Ministry* with a disinterested Fidelity, Religion and Probity.

Probity. A *General*, a *Soldier*, may there find Models of Military Prudence, Courage, Moderation and Humanity; by which they may learn to War as *Men* and not as *Tigers*. The *Ladies* also that will read *History* with other Lights than the *Fables* of *Ariosto*, and *Tales* of *Amidas*, may furnish themselves with all those Vertues give Grace and Glory to their Sex.

A *Greek Sophist* caused a *Note* to be placed over his Door, by which he informed the Publick he had Remedies for all the Troubles of the Mind: The Writing would have been better placed over the Door of *History*. She has indeed Medicaments for all the Grievs and Maladies of the Soul; and when any one approaches with a real Desire of being cured, and not with the vain Curiosity of seeing only, he cannot miss, among such a multitude of Examples, of all sorts, finding a *Cenitive* or *Corrective*, be his Ill of what kind so-

ever,

ever, let it arise from the Intemperance of his Passions, or strokes of Fortune.

*History* performs yet more, she furnishes with Preservatives against all Evils to come, let them arrive on what side they will. And since, as the Wise Man says, nothing is new under the Sun, a Learned and Judicious Reader may learn to foretell the future by the past; and regulate what he has to do, by what has been done; and so become *Diviner* without *Magick*, and *Prophet* without *Inspiration*. There is nothing can arrive, that he will not see afar off; and against which he will not have time to prepare and arm himself with what is necessary, Prudence or Courage. Also the Wise, Magnanimous, and all other Vertuous, may improve themselves by the reading of History; but then 'tis necessary this reading, as I have said, be Attentive and Serious, made with Judgment and Design; and

and that they bring other Dispositions than to a Gaming-house, where there is nothing to see but the rolling of Dice, and counting of Cards.

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Dissertation II.

*Of the Nature and Art of  
History.*

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C H A P. I.

*From whence comes the Name of History, and the Different Kinds.*

**A**LL that I have hitherto said, was necessary for the Honour of *History*, and to discover the Merit to those who daily see her without making Acquaintance. 'Tis time, that to give you a more distinct Knowledge of her, I should make a more regular and methodical Picture containing her Matter, Parts and Form. And here

here I will not trouble my self with the Wrangling of *Pedants*, who not knowing how to employ their Excess of Words and Leisure, Dispute among themselves from what Root comes the Word *History*; one drawing it from a *Greek Word* that signifies to *Recount*; and others from another that signifies to stop the Flood; because *History*, as they say, stops the Flood of things, and gives them Consistance and Durance. I will also dispence with my self (under Favour of the Reader) from entring into the long detail they make of the different sorts of *History*, and content my self to reduce them all into three principal Species, *Divine*, *Natural* and *Humane*. *Divine* is that immediately inspired by God, as are all those Histories contained in the Bible. *Natural*, such as contain the Works of Nature, as *Aristotle* of *Animals*, *Theophrastus*, *Pliny*, and many others. *Humane* treats of Mens Actions; and that by a second Dissection,

Dissection, divides it self into five other kinds, *True*, *Fabulous*, *Universal*, *Particular* and *Singular*. The *True* Treats of things received by the common Belief of Men: The *Fabulous*, of such things as are feigned and imagined for the Divertisement of the Reader, as what we find in *Poems* and *Romances*: The *Universal* has an Extension without Bounds, embraces all Times and Nations; as that of *Diodorus* of *Sicily*, *Trogus*, *Justin*, *Cardinal Baronius*, and our Father *Sallian*: The *Particular* is much more confin'd, and contents it self with the Extent of one Nation, as *Livy* and *Tacitus*; or one Reign, as that of *Quintus Curtius*: The *Singular* yet more restrain'd, treats of certain choise Persons that have merited to live more than once, to be seen more than in one Age: And we may place in this Rank the *Cesars* of *Suetonius*, the Famous Lives of *Plutarch*, the Philosophers of *Laertius*, and the Sophists of *Philostratus*:

*lostratus*: And amongst these, not to stay too long in the Times so far off our Age, we may give place to the Collections made by the *Sieur de Brantome* of Princes and Captains, Princesses and Ladies, that have lived since the Reign of *Francis* the first to his Time.

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## C H A P. II.

*The Definition of History given by Vossius, Examined and Refuted.*

**T**HE Confusion of *Species* so different, ought to be set right; and that cannot be better done than by a *Regular Definition* that may be as a correct and just *Portraiture*, where true History naturally represented, and according to her proper Character, may be distinguish'd from *Illegitimates* and *Bastards*, that are only so by *Supposition*.

*Vossius*

## Of History.

51

*Vossius*, to whom the Age is obliged for the most accomplish'd Collections of all that appertains to History, has made a *Definition*, that, to speak the Truth, is only a Fantastical Picture of his own Imagination. He cuts off the Tongue and Fingers, takes away the Voice and Pen, and retrenches the Auditors and Readers. In a word, He would neither have her speak or write; that is to say, he has shut her up in the Breast of an Historian, and will only have her a simple Knowledge of particular things, that ought to be exhibited to the Memory of Men for Instruction to live well. If this *Definition* was Just, she would be no more the great Work, the laborious Enterprize, the Burden that makes the greatest Wits give way; and with a moderate Memory it would be as easie to be an *Historian* as to Play at *Picket* or *Tic-tack*.

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Besides,

Besides, a Man without the least Tincture of *Grammar*, or any knowledge of *History*, by the sole Report that may be made him of what she contains, might become all the Historians in a Moment. And if Composition be but as Cloaths to the Body, as *Vossius* says, he may be *Thucydides* and *Tacitus* in Body and Mind, and want nothing of either, but the *Greek Mantle* or *Roman Robe*.

Thus (with his Favour whom I should grieve to offend) as he understands the Laws of Dissertation, he will not be so Angry at, as a Learned Person beyond the *Alps*, whose Wit I have a Just Esteem for, and yet he entred Processes against me in the most gallant Court, and before a Prince the most Spiritual of all *Italy*, because I was not of his Opinion in some Points touching the Art of *Emblems* in the *Tournaments* of the Learned, as well as those of the Cavaliers. 'Tis permitted to strike when



when a Man cannot otherwise defend himself; and 'tis less a Mark of Esteem than Scorn, not to design to lift the Arm against those we Rencounter. Learned Princes, the Saints of the Church, are every day treated in the same manner, and after having refuted them, we celebrate their Festivals, and recommend our selves to their Prayers.

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## C H A P. III.

*The true Definition of History, and its Picture drawn with all its Parts.*

LET us then make a *Definition* or *Picture* of *History*, that may be more Natural than that *Vossius* has left us of her: And 'twill not only be more Natural, but Entire and Compleat, if we say, That *History is a continued Narration of things*

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*things True, Great and Publick, writ with Spirit, Eloquence and Judgment; for Instruction to Particulars and Princes, and Good of Civil Society.*

The Definition is not of those Slubber'd pieces, drawn by the *Logicians* at two strokes; 'tis drawn out at length, but has nothing Vain or Superfluous. The Kind, the Difference, the Form, and the End of History are there expressed.

First, The word *History* is a Genetical Term, that is common to all Relations, whether Spoke or Writ, in Prose or in Verse, True or False.

Secondly, 'Tis a *continued Relation*, that has all its Parts fastned together, as those of the Body, or regular Edifice. And by that History is distinguish'd from *Annals*, *Journals* and *Gazettes*, whose Parts not being joyn'd, without Correspondence, without Union, are only rude Heaps of Materials.

In the third place, 'Tis a *Narration of Truth*, by which it differs from

from *Heroick Poems* and *Romances*, that are regular Compositions, and demand Unity and Correspondence in all their parts; but through this Defect, all those Edifices, where the Architecture appears so Just, and the Furniture so Rich, are only Imaginary Structures, and Beautiful Castles in the Air.

But History requires not only they should be True, but Great and Politick; and by that, in the fourth place, raises it self above *Memoirs* and *Journals*, that entertain with Private and Domestick, and sometimes with Trifles, which Posterity might very well be Ignorant of without Prejudice.

In the fifth place, *History* (I speak of the perfect) must be writ with *Spirit*, *Eloquence* and *Judgment*. All true Histories, from whatever Parts they have come, whether from *Greece* or *Italy*, have this Character, and that distinguishes from Legends and Chronicles that come out of Religious Houses;

Houses; as likewise from *Memoirs* and *Commentaries* that are happily born in more polish'd places, but want the Warmth of Wit, the Lights of Eloquence, with which the Structure of History must be enlightned; the Ancient Masters have left us this by Tradition: *Cicero* says, A good *Historian* must be a good *Orator*: *Polybius* affirms, A Narration that barely recounts things done, and teaches not why, how, and for what end, is only fit for Boys that would be amused, and not an History when Men are to be instructed. *Lucian* has said the same after them. And History being a Practical Philosophy, that teaches by Patterns and Examples; and this Method of Teaching being more fine than that of Arguments in form, it therefore demands a greater fineness of Wit, and if their Judgments fail, then whence shall they have the Faculty of discerning Action and Things? Or if they be Dumb or Mute, How shall they  
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use the words to perswade Princes, Statesmen and Generals; and of what shall they make Elogies and Crowns for Illustrious Persons, if they are unprovided of *Wit* the *Composer*, and *Eloquence* the *Matter* of them.

The *Instruction of Particulars and Princes, and the Benefit of Civil Society* who make Profit by it, properly belongs to History, makes her exterior Form, gives her a better Rank, and renders her far more considerable, than the Fabulous Relations, that do but as Chess and Cards, represent the Adventures of imagined Kings and Queens.

## C H A P. IV.

*To what Art History belongs ; And  
what Rank she holds in Learning.  
The difference between an Historian,  
Orator and Poet.*

**H**E that does not know *History* by this draught, will never know her by any other : But let us Paint her as we please, the Masters are not agreed what *Rank* she ought to hold in the *Family* of the *Muses* : Some place her under *Grammar*, much to her Degradation, to draw her from Courts and Armies, and league her with the Youth and Rubbish of the College. Besides, what Relation is there between the Structure of Speech, and the Publick Happiness, which is the end of the Art of History. Others do, for a little more Honour, place her next to *Rhetorick* ; but yet between the end of an *Orator*, and that of an *Historian*,



ian, there is such a Difference, that will never permit them to come together in any one Point. What Agreement is there betwixt *Truth*, which is the Soul of *History*, and a feign'd *Likeness*, which is the Form of an *Oration*; and the great Effort of an Orator, who never thinks to come off with better Success, than when he has cloathed his Fable in the Habit of Truth.

There are that have not distinguished *Poetry* from *History*, but by the *Cadence* and *Harmony* of *Verse*; as if there has not been *Poems* in *Prose*, and *History* in *Verse*. *Cicero* himself, who calls *History* a *Free Poem*, and writ the *Actions* of his *Consulship* in *Verse*, did he think that *Verse* was a Chain to Poetry; or do we find by his being so chain'd, his *Sallies* have been less Frequent, or his *Elevations* less Bold.

Others have term'd her a *Poem on Foot*, and delighted themselves with the Expression: Those have never

never seen her but in the *Annals* of *Popes*, where she may be properly said to go on foot; but had they looked into *Livy* and *Tacitus*, they would have seen her march like a great Lady, with an Equipage to give her Respect; though not altogether so great and Pompous, as that of *Poetry* that goes always with four Horses and those wing'd.

Whatever may be the *Equipage* of one or the other, to express myself more plainly, *History* has certainly much of the Air and Features of *Poetry*; but with this Air and Features they are yet different in Matter, Form, Disposition and Locution. A *Poet* contents himself with the Actions of a Year, which serves him for a Foundation; he builds upon this, makes his own Materials, and gives what Shape what Figure his Fancy pleases; deviates from Truth as much as possible, and from particulars; and applies himself to make Models, form Likenesses and Ideas; and as for the  
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placing these Materials so work'd, has no regard to the order of time which is Natural, but endeavours after taking the Imagination and Sight, and giving them Pleasure by Surprise.

The *Historian* labours upon other Matter, and after a different Manner: The Actions of several Years, several Reigns, and many Ages, are his Materials, which he places carefully as they are brought to him by others or his own Industry; or if he alters the Truth by adding or diminishing, a Process is taken out against him with as much Rigour, as against Falsifiers and Clippers of Money. He avoids all Artifice in placing his Matters, Faithfully observes Succession of time, and disposes every thing according to Nature. And by all these differences, without touching the Style that I shall speak of in its due place, may be seen that *Poetry* and *History* are very different, notwithstanding the resemblance *Castelnuetro* the *Italian*

*lian* imagines to have found between them.

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## C H A P. V.

*That History has need of an Art to govern her: What are the Functions of this Art? Authors that have writ of it.*

**A**Fter what has been said, who can doubt but that *History* has a peculiar *Art* that directs and governs her, as well as *Grammar* *Poetry* and *Logick*. *Syllogism* that is a small Structure of three Terms joyn'd together, and may be compared to those little Houses Children build with Cards upon Tables, cannot be raised without the Art singular to it self: And *History*, that is an Edifice where so many Ages, so many Reigns, Emperors and Kings must live for ever and be preserved from perishing, where  
Fortune

Fortune that throws down Empires, Policy and Eloquence, the Science of War and Peace must reign; can she be composed tumultuously, and at all Adventure raised without Line and Compass.

Nature that constantly keeps her course, and gives the same Forms to all her Works, has no occasion for Art to assist her; the Chymist is not wanting to make her Gold, the Painter to draw her Flowers, nor the Statuary to carve her Men: But those Works that not being necessarily determined to any one Form, are sometimes Perfect and sometimes Defective, according to the Device and Stroaks they receive from the Fancy or Hand of the Workman, must needs want the Assistance of some Art, from whence they may take direction. And as by ill Pictures compared with those of *Myniord* our *French Raphael* (not to search for that in *Italy* we have in *Paris*) we may see there is an Art in Designing  
and

and Drawing: So by the ill writ Histories of these times, compared with those of Antiquity, we may be convinced Historians require some Art, that may conduct and govern them in a Work so Important and Difficult, the Wit of Man cannot attempt a greater.

The three Principal Functions of this Art, are choise of Materials that must raise this Edifice of History; Disposition and Embellishing of them with such Colours and Figures they are capable of receiving from the Stile, of which hereafter.

As to the rest, we must know this Art is not of that number, where a Man may be Apprentice and Master in one day, since all the great Masters of Antiquity have taken care to reduce it into Method and Rules. *Cicero* has done it several times, but by occasion only and in passing. *Dion Halicar.* in his Observations on the History of *Thucydides*, where the Censure upon  
this



his great Man, remains Example and Lesson to all those that come after. *Lucian* has likewise done it excellently, and with so pleasant an Air, he at once diverts and instructs his Reader. And to pass by *Pontin*, *Bodin*, *Vossius*, *de Mascordi*, and several other Moderns, our Worthy and Learned Monsieur *de la Motte de Vayer*, that seem'd to have a Library in his Head, and gave us another in his Works, would not let this be the sole Matter without a touch of his Wit. And since this Work has been under my hands, I am told Monsieur *l'Abbe de Cassaigne* has composed the *Art of History* in Verse, of which, if it be permitted to judge by his other Works, the Art Poetick of *Horace* will have but the Advantage of Antiquity. He is no common Poet of *Bagatels*, his Musés are Noble, and entertain with nothing but what is great: But what I esteem most is his Modesty, far from the Presumption of some, who for a *Madrigal*, or ill contriv'd

triv'd *Stanza*, that cost them more Pains than *Jupiter* suffered when he brought forth *Minerva*, fancy themselves deserving Incense and Worship from the People.

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Dissertation III.  
*Of the Parts of History.*

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C H A P. I.

*What are the Parts of History? What Actions ought to be the Matter? The Opinions of the Ancients concerning the Truth of these Actions.*

AND now having explicated in general, the order of Dissertation demands, I should enter upon and unfold the several Parts of History; and remark to the *Historian*, the Constitution and Measure that each requires. *History* is not so simple a Compo-

Composition as some believe, nor so diverse as others: Her *Parts* are *Narration*, *Judgment*, *Harangues* and *Digressions*: The first is *Essential*, the last *Accidental*, the second and third hold the *Middle* between one and the other.

*Actions* or things done, are the *Matter* of *Narration*; and *Judgment* and the Principal Duty of the *Historian*, is to chuse them *True*, *Great*, and as much as he can *Publick*. To begin with *Truth*, Whatever our Modern Accademist the learned Monsieur le Vayer may say otherwise; there are no *Reasons*, no confronting of *Witnesses*, that ought to be received against her; he will pardon me if in this I pay less deference to him than to *Cicero*, who teacheth me that *Truth* is the Foundation of *History*. *Polybius* that says she is as the *Line* to the *Rule*, and *Eyes* to an *Animal*. And to *Dion Halicar.* that gives her the Office of *Priestess* in the *Temple* of *Truth*; and 'tis by that *History* is

is distinguish'd from *Romances*. *Judgments*, *Harangues* and *Digressions* are common to both, and if it be once permitted the Historian to be Faulty on this side, What will become of the Publick Faith? Where will she find another Support? How shall any Man confide or put Confidence in her?

I am confident our Friend did not intend to shut the *Temple of Truth* against *History*; he would only have understood as a new subject for his Sceptical Notions, that all she says has not the same force as the Divine Oracles; and that all Historians have not Sacrificed to her. I may say as much my self, and yet more, namely, there are some that never entred this Temple, but have turn'd their Backs to it as well as to that of Modesty, and yet have made a Revenue by their fabulous and insipid Relations. Their Histories have been Just Histories, as the Plummet Rules are Just Rules: And they

they are Historians of the same Credit, and of the like Veneration with *Lucian's* Als, or that of *Apuleius*.

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## CHAP. II.

*That Truth ought to be the Principal Care of the Historian: How far this Care obliges him; and what are the Laws.*

LET the *Historian* then make *Truth* his *Principal Care*, and not fear that so engaging himself he should be overcharged with infinite Observations and difficult Precepts. *Cicero*, and all others after him, have reduced them to three, to say nothing False, not to lessen Truth, and to give every thing its just Measure, without Elevation or Depressure. Of these three, the first gives no place to Explications, Dispensations and Privileges; for there



there is no Falsity so Innocent, nor of so little Consequence, the Historian can admit of, he is not only forbid false *Pistoles* and *Crowns*, but *Pence* and *Farthings*.

By the Second, he must not be found at the foot of the Letter without some Explication, for then History would be troubled in every Line with useless Trifles, and sullied with Scandalous Debauches. An Historian must have regard to the End, which is to Instruct and Profit, and take his Measures from thence, of what ought to be said or with-held. Posterity might very well have been without the Knowledge, how often *Charles* the Fifth drank at every Meal, and how far his Extravagance run, when the Thoughts of Health and Conscience were laid aside. If those notable Remarks had remained in the Breast of the Historian, there had been no Injury done; and what need that future Ages should be made acquainted, so Religious an Emperor

Emperor was not always Chast.

By the Third, *Amplifications* that are Vertues, and give the Merit to an *Orator*, are defended by the *Historian*. This is not so easily observed, as those may believe, that know not the Movements of a Pen, conducted by an Imagination Fertile in Noble Expressions, and Ambitious of gaining Reputation. It may be said under Favour of *Antiquity*, her best Authors have been loose in the Observation of this Precept. *Alexander, Hannibal, Scipio, Marius* and *Cesar*, were great Men, nay Colossos amongst Men; but *Quintus Curtius, Titus Livy, Salust* and *Plutarch*, contented not themselves with their Natural Greatness, but built them Bases, that make them appear by the half greater than their Natural Proportion. An *Historian* must leave to the *Orators* and *Poets*, the use of these Figures that carry their Subjects beyond Measure, even to Monsters, and abstain from Col-

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ours that flaire too much, and change  
the Face of things by Excess of  
Lustre.

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C H A P. III.

*The Sources by which Falsities enter  
History; And first of Ignorance:  
Of the Difficulties in discovering  
Truth: Ways of illuding Judg-  
ment: An Ancient and Modern  
Example thereupon.*

**A**N Historian Lover of Truth,  
and Religious Observer of her  
Precepts, must with Care avoid  
the three Springs from whence or-  
dinarily flow by divers Conduits  
all that is false in History, *viz.*  
*Ignorance, Hatred and Flattery.* There  
is an *Affected Ignorance* that is Faulty,  
and an *Ignorance* through *Infirmity*  
that is Innocent: Of the first are  
those that turn their Backs to the  
Light for fear of being informed,  
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will have no Guides, at best but ill ones; love rather to wander about, than follow the straight Path, because it agrees not with the Obliquity of their Passions. And the Ignorance of these People, being an evil *Disposition* in their *Will*, rather than *Understanding*, there is nothing wanting to their Cure, but to shew them their way, lend them a Hand, and carry the Light before them; nothing but to purge their Will from an embued Hatred, Envy or Animosity: That being done the Film will fall from their Eyes, the Vapors dissipate, and they be enabled to follow Truth, or at least admit the Conduct of good Guides. But before this, they must not be suffered to put Pen to Paper, otherwise in the place of natural well-composed Bodies, they will form but *Spectres* and *Phantoms*; they will besmear and cover with Dirt all those that are not in their liking. Deck trim and Perfume others and with an Insolent Scorn of four  
Publick

Publick Faith, all the Buildings of their Histories will be only a Theatre of Illusions and Impostures.

The Second Source of *Ignorance* follows the Condition of Mankind, to whom Nature has not given Eyes behind and before, to see the past and to come: Those that she has bestow'd reach but a short space; and in that space arise so many Mists, are form'd so many Clouds, that either cover or change the Face of things, that ordinarily they think they see what really they do not. The Historian need not trouble himself for the Faults he falls into of this Nature, through the weakness of his Sight: More is required than is due, when he is obliged to warrant all that he says: If he must be Sworn upon all Occasions, and make Profession of his Faith at the end of every Line, what *Spectacles* must he get to see distinctly at the distance of three or four hundred Years, to perceive

yet further things that Antiquity has shut up in the Coverings of a Time Immemorial. If we know not in the King's Bed-chamber to day, what passes in the Clofet; How shall we know in the Reign of *Lewis* the Fourteenth, what was consulted by all the *Lewis's*, *Henries* and *Charles's*, from *Clovis* to this present.

Without searching into the lost Times of Antiquity, Do all the Affairs Contemporary with an *Historian* fall under his Knowledge? Sees he any thing else but the Barbs and Coverings of things done before his Eyes: And what serveth him the sight of the *Watch*, without that of the *Springs* and *Movements*; or who can convey them so Pure and Sincere, as the Publick Faith and the Truth of History demands from him?

*Letters of Princes*, *Memoirs of Statesmen*, *Instructions of Ambassadors*, are great *Succors*: But *Princes* and *Statesmen*, do they not some time



times prevaricate in their Writings; are their Pens of greater Credit than their Lips? And are not Ambassadors necessitated to deceive, being first deceived themselves? Wars, Revolts, Battles and Sieges are as publick *Shews*, every one sees the *Machines* move, and the changing of the *Scene*; but the *Springs* that make these *Motions* and *Revolutions*, are they exposed to every view? Do Princes commit their Secrets to *Gazetteers*, and inform them of the *Motives* for which they take up *Arms*? And what account can they give, if they are not well inform'd themselves; if they see not their Affairs but in the Lights and Colours with which they are disguised? If they are at sometimes but Actors of Pieces composed by their Servants?

Without travelling into *Macedonia* to that *Philip*, who by his Contempt of a Vain and Licentious Woman, brought upon himself a heavy War. In the Descent the

*Engliſh* made upon the Iſle of *Rhee*, the King of *England* thought he had undertaken a Religious one, of as great Merit as that of the *Holy Land*; when 'twas a War of pure *Gallantry*, made by the amorous Inclinations of his *Favourite*. Things of this Nature arrive every day in the Motions of States, where Men figure to themselves great Engines and Wheels, when there is nothing but a Plank and end of a Cord; ſome Reſentment, *Caprice* or Love-Toy that diſturbs theſe great Bodies, and puts them out of Humour.

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## C H A P. IV.

*What Certainty ought to be expected from History. What Faith given her. The Indulgence to be granted Historians: And the middle way to be held between too Easie, and too Curious a Belief.*

**L**ET Men judge then, whether 'tis reasonable to exact *Infalibility* in an *Historian*; or that what he writes should be of the same certitude with what the *Evangelists* have written? And whether it is not Just to excuse the Weakness of his Sight, and pardon the Mistakes, when it happens he gives Credit to the False for the True; amidst so many Obstacles that stop the passage to Truth, so many Vails that cover, and unfaithful Guides that turn him out of his way.

'Tis the part of an Honest Man, as *Aristotle* says, not to search  
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for more *Certainty* than the thing will permit. Let us keep within the bounds of a Just Commerce; and as we give not a *Divine Faith* to *History*, let us not demand a *Divine Certainty*; let us not be more Severe than St. *Augustin*, who absolves the *Historian* that lies not of himself and with design; that is unfaithful only in Relations brought him by others: Neither let us have that idle Credulity of some People, who fear they have injur'd their Neighbours in not crediting some History, it may be that of *John of Paris* or *Melusine*.

There is a *middle way* to be held between the *Easiness* of those that believe all, and the *Obstinacy* of those that believe nothing. The one favours of *Folly*, the other of *Impudence*. For though it has been said all Men are Liers, it does not infer in all Purposes, and at all times. All *Historians* have had a weak Sight, and fail'd in some things (I except only those conducted

duced by the Holy Spirit) but for two or three Mistakes let us not be so Rigorous to condemn all History. The *Nine Muses* of *Herodotus* have lived with Reputation hitherto, and no body thought them deserving the Fire or Extinction; because sometimes they have turned from the *Truth* towards the *Fable*. And though in what relates to the *Jews* and *Christians*, *Tacitus* has been convicted of many Falshoods, yet he has not been drove from Libraries where he governs in chief.

On the other side, we must not be such Flatterers, and so complaisant to Antiquity, and to those that have fail'd with design and through Malice, as to take their part against Justice and Truth. The *Athenians* erected a Statue to *Berosus* with a Golden Tongue: The *Romans* another to *Josephus* the *Jewish Historian*. But we will not for that Idolize *Berosus* and his Errors; much less *Josephus* for the *Heathens*

*Judaism* he has framed in his History, in which he has been more Impious than the *Philistians* that placed the *Ark* by *Dagon*. If they joyn'd them, 'twas without Confusion; but this Man has made of *Judaism* and *Paganism* mix'd together, something more Monstrous than the Fabulous Relations of *Centaurs* and *Lapithæ*.

I am not the first nor alone that have complain'd; I speak but after *Baronius*, *Melchior-canna*, *Salmeron*, *Maldonat*, and many others, great Church-men and Scholars, upon whose Depositions there is neither *Jew* nor *Infidel* but would condemn this Writer. And to make it appear, that what I say of his *Gentile Judaism* is no Chimera of my making, 'tis but to remember that Text in *Exodus*, where God commanding the *Jews* to respect those that govern, forbids their speaking Ill of Gods: And according to the ordinary Phrase of Scripture, by the Name of Gods, is meant the

Magi.



*Magistrates and Princes of the People. Josephus changes this Article of the Law in favour of Dagon and Moloch, as well as Jupiter and Juno. And where Moses says, Thou shalt not detract from the Gods, nor Blaspheme the Prince of thy Nation: He makes him say, Let no body Curse the Gods that are owned for such in other Cities. And more to provide for the Safety of Idols, and to put their Altars and Offerings out of Danger, after having taken care of their Reputation, he imputes falsely to the Legislator this Law, so contrary to his other Laws, Let none Pillage the Temples of Strangers, nor Violate the Offerings made to any God whatsoever. The Sacrificers of Samaria, the Priests of Baal, Could they have Preach'd more advantageously for their Idols, than this Priest of the Tribe of Levi? Is there any thing more contrary to the words of Moses, who recommends so strictly to the People of God in Exodus and Deuteronomy, to beat*

beat down the False Gods, to break their Statues, and set Fire to their Woods and Temples. Yet this Man makes such a singular Profession of the Truth, as if the Pens of *Moses*, *Daniel* or *Isaiah*, had not been more Sincere and Faithful than his.

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## C H A P. V.

*That the Historian, curious of Truth, must not trust to Fame. The Character of Fame. Partial Relations less to be relied on. That he ought to be without Passion; as well as Country, and Party.*

NOTwithstanding there are Remedies for these Inconveniences; and since the first degree of doing well, where Perfection is drein'd from all Defects, is not to be attain'd by Humane Frailty: Let us endeavour after the Second, where

where small Faults are passed over; and according to *Horace*, *Those esteemed Perfect, who have the least Imperfection.* To compass this end, there are three things to be observed in the choise of Matters the Historian would work upon: The first is, Not to take them from *Fame* but very seldom, and with great Discretion. The Second, To draw them yet more rarely from the Writings of Interested Persons or Enemies. The Third, To make his *Principal Fund, Relations, Memoirs, Letters and Instructions* of those who have been either Movers, or Spectators of Affairs, that have had them in their Hands, or before their Eyes.

First, He must not trust to *Fame*, she is a Worker of Impostures and Calumnies in every Language, every day: She is accused of Falsity every day; stands convicted without ever Blushing or correcting her Manners: She has a hundred Mouths ascribed her, and not one of them  
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can repeat the same thing twice, or any thing like it. In one word, She raises invifible Armies, and with one Breath defeats others that remain entire; after the Rout ſhe Kills and reſtores to Life; takes away and gives Victories to whom ſhe pleaſes; and in deſpite of Fortune, Crownſthe Vanquiſhed, and overthrowſthe Victorious. What Truth can we expect from ſuch a Courier, who has nothing ordinarily but Falſe News in her Mouth? Mailſ fill'd with falſe Relations, and falſe Letters. And will not that *Hiſtorian* oblige Poſterity, that leaves an Extract of all theſe Vain and Idle Things? And what I ſay of *Fame*, may be likewise ſaid of *Gazetteers*, thoſe Secretaries without Credit, who ſell themſelves to write a thouſand Falſities, and diſtribute them every Week, with the loſs of their Reputation.

Secondly, Since the labour of an *Hiſtorian* is different from that of a *Poet*, who makes his own Materials,

rials, as well as the Figure he gives them : He must do as the *Architect*, inform himself of the *Quarries* from whence he must fetch the Stone and Marble for the Structure of his Edifice. He must remass all the *Memoirs*, *Relations*, *Acts* publick and private, that regard the Time, the Persons and Actions, of which he would compose his History : But he must have a care those Pieces be authentick, well esteemed, and purged from Falsifications and Disguisements, that carry the Passion of Parties ; otherwise he will impose upon the Publick Faith, and the Deceit will pass from his own Age to Posterity. Above all things he must abstain from certain *Sources*, from whence there is nothing to draw but Filth and Venom.

Following this Rule, and being to write of *Charles* the Ninth, he will not search for Truth in the *Memoirs* of *Colligny* : And to make a History of his Successor, he will

as little consult the Relations of his *Mynions*, though there remains but that of the *Guises*. If he is to write of the *Popes*, and *Court of Rome*, he will not do it from the *Memoirs* come out of *Geneva*: And if he is to speak of *Jesuits*, he will forbear giving Credit to the *Holland Gazettes*, and Faith of Hereticks, whether known or disguised, Ancient or Modern.

If the President *de Thou* (otherwise a great Man) had thought of these Rules, and had distrusted as he ought the *Dutch Libels* infected with the Poison of Heresie, he had left us a History more correct and less subject to offend the Curious in the matter of Belief. And if others that have followed him, had addressed themselves to *Streams* more Pure than those that flow from the Lake of *Geneva*, the Filth they have suck'd up to bespatter the *Roman Prelates* and *Catholick Princes*, had not recoil'd upon their own Works, Conscience and Reputation;



tion ; but they thought that a heap of Impostures and Calumnies drawn from the Scandalous Chronicle of *Henry the Third*, and the *Libels* of the *League* and *Hugonots*, would raise their Name ; and after that *Salust*, *Livy* and *Tacitus*, darkned with their *Eclat*, be less esteemed, and give place to them.

But because *Ignorance* is not the greatest *Source* of *Falsity* in *History*, and that the most part enter through *Malice* and *Flattery*, and the *Affections* that cause them : The Care the Historian must have to furnish himself with good *Instructions* and *Memoirs*, will serve him but in little stead, if he does not *Disinterest* and *Purge* himself from all sorts of *Passion* : Where *Interest* is *Master*, *Truth* is seldom harkned to, and less where *Malice* is *Mistress* ; and the Pen of a Writer must be very steady, this *Passion* does not turn awry.

From thence comes the *Contrarieties* are found in *Spanish* and *English*

*glisb Histories*, when they speak of *France* or *French-men*; and in those of the *French*, when they speak of *Spaniards* and *Englisb*. Though of all the Writers, of what Nation soever, there are none that write with more Sincerity and Truth, defile their Pens with less Gaul, and do greater Right to the Merit and Valour of their Enemies than ours. 'Tis a Sight capable to divert the most Melancholly and *Chagrin*, to see in the History of *Sandonal* the *French* fly before the *Spaniards*, like the Game before the *Falcon*. When of all People, they can best witness the *French* are not accustomed to use their Spurs with their Swords in their Hands. And 'tis not less pleasant to see in *Guicciardin Charles* the Eighth enter *Florence* in the Habit of *Pacolet*; when this little Man he turns into Ridicule with the Wooden Sword and Spurs he sends him, forc'd his way through the Bowels of all the Republick of *Italy*. Let the Historian then

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then possess himself he is of all Countries or none ; that he is without Father and Mother ; without Genealogy or Race, as the ancient King of *Salem* : That he is of no Party but that of Truth, whatever Livery he wears, or whatever Language he speaks ; and that he owes her all his Worship and Devotion, in whatsoever Climate he is found : And that being Debtor (to use the words of *St. Paul*) to the *Fools* and *Wise*, *Barbarians* and *Greeks*, his Honour, as well as Conscience, is obliged to do Justice, and render every one their due.

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## C H A P. VI.

*That nothing ought to enter History,  
but what is Great and Illustrious.  
That trifling things ought to have  
no Place there.*

I Have been a little long upon this Article of *Truth*, because she is the Soul and Form of History: And the Historian, whatever Merit he may otherwise have, without *her*, cannot acquit himself of his Duty, nor sustain the Name he bears. Truth suffices not, the things that enter the Composition of History, they must have a solid Grandeur, and *Eclat* arising from their Nature. 'Tis what *Ammianus* would say, when he tells us History moves but in high places, marches but upon the Pinnacles and Points of great Affairs.

The reason is, *History* being an *Exemplary Philosophy*, invented for the Instruction of the Great, she ought

ought to take from them the Measure of her Examples, and not give them but their Proportion, esteeming them as they are, *Giants* amongst Men; and *Giants* charg'd with the Burden of the World, as the Scripture expresses it, will not like to have *Puppets* proposed for their Imitation.

On the other side, The good Form of Government, the Happiness of Civil Society, the Peace and Repose of Kingdoms, being the principal End of *History*, is it to be thought she can arrive at this end, by the relation of Drunken *Bouts*, and the Extravagance of *Carnavals*. Another Intention is to eternise the Glory of Illustrious Persons, and preserve them from the Ruin of Age, and Obliquity of Time. And who but knows, Glory is a Light that reflects not, but such Qualities as render Kings and Princes greater than their Fortunes, with all the Grandeur of their Train, Equipage and Riches:  
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For if that is all they are, we may say they are only *Dwarfs* upon *gilded Pillars*.

A Fourth End of *History*, Is to quicken Noble Minds, and press them forward with an Emulation of the great things she recounts. And a Fifth, To instruct the present and to come, by the past, and by that to profit the Publick. Can she attain these Ends so high and great, by the Relation of *Bagatells*? Was it the *Lance* of *Achilles*, or his *Lyre*, that stung the Heart of *Alexander* with Jealousie? Was it the *Bacchanals* and *Debauches* of *Alexander*, that disquieted the Mind of *Cesar*, and troubled his Repose? And will not Posterity be much obliged by that Historian, that leaves her a List of all those Danced in the Mask at the Marriage of such a Prince or Princess? That leaves an Account of the Expence there made in Meats and Comfitures? The *Italians*, though accustomed to Contemn all that is

not



not of *Italy*, beside their *Corio* where the Army of *John Galeas* Lord of *Milan* most engages his Pen, he abruptly breaks off, and takes occasion, from the Marriage of *Valentine* with a Son of *France*, to enter into the Closet of the new married Lady, search her Cabinet, and make a long Inventory of all the Trifles he there finds, to the number of her Chess-men, Knives and Clocks. Did he not believe these rare things carried into *France*, would there be Demonstrations of the Riches and Magnificence of *Italy*? You may see others make a reckoning of all the Habits and Linnen in the Wardrobe of a Prince, and the Furniture of his Chambers; that will teach you the Names of his Dogs and Horses; tell you how many *Trumpets* he has in his *Troops*, how many *Chariots*, and *Oven-forks* in his Equipage, and of what Stuff are the *Coverings* of his *Mules*. I should like as well one that was to make me the Description of a Palace,

Palace, should leave out the Courts, the Portico's, Galleries, Halls and Chambers, and entertain me with the Number, Form and Painting of Weathercocks.

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## C H A P. VII.

*That Military Actions are not the Principal Matter of History. The Historian ought to be oftner in the Closet than Army. That he ought to shun the Affectation of Marvellous things; and abstain as much from Defect as Excess, in the Relation of Miracles.*

**O**thers again on the contrary esteeming nothing great but the *Actions* of War, are always in some besieged Town, or Army besieging; speak of nothing but *Combats* and *Attacks*, *Ovens* and *Mines*; nothing to be heard but *Bombs* and *Cannon*; as if they had no body to instruct

instruct but the Court of *Guards* and *Musketeers*.

*War* is not, as these believe, the best *Theatre* for *History*; *Sieges*, *Affaults* and *Battles*, are not her most useful *Lessons*; otherwise *Statesmen*, *Magistrates*, and the *Long Robe*, would learn nothing from her; and all her *Informations* would but reduce *Fire* and *Blood* into *Method*; and serve only for *Ravage* and *Destruction*.

Let the *Historian* know then the *Closet* is his proper place; that he ought to be there longer and oftner than in the *Army*: That the explaining of *Councils*, unfolding *Intrigues*, and discovering *Cabals*, are more his *Business*, than *Desolations*, *Burnings* and *Massacres*: That he did not take Pen in Hand to learn a private Centinel to manage his *Sword*, but to teach *Princes* the Art of *Reigning*, and *Statesmen* the Art of *Serving*: To unfold *Reasons* of *State*, and the *Secrets* of *Government*: And this he does  
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by disintangling the *Motives* and *Pretexts* of *Affairs*; by following their *Movements* and *Evasions* to the Fountain-head. And as the greatest *Advantages* of *History* are attain'd by this Means, 'tis to that he owes his greatest Application, and all the force of his Wit.

In this Article that regards the *Grandeur* of things, there is another Defect that ought not to be forgotten: Some, whether through a vain Affectation of things Great and Marvellous, that must not be so much sought after in *History*, nor are not of that value as in a *Poem*, or by a disordered desire to nourish the Curiosity of Readers, and fasten their Attention, fill their *Histories* with *Miracles* and *Prodigies* they bring in from all Parts. And rather than want, assist at the *Assemblies* of *Demons* and *Magicians*, to gather what may fill the Vacancies of certain People, with whom the False and Monstrous have

have better Reception than Truth and Right.

Others more bold in *Heroick Prose*, divide *Elephants* in two at one blow with a Sword, strike down *Dragons* of twenty Fathoms long with a little Wand. And for that it is in Scripture, that *Sampson* defeated an Army with the Jaw-bone of an *Ass*; *Procopius*, not to be behind-hand, tells you of a *Thracian Soldier*, that with one single Arrow put to flight an Army of *Goths*. *Paul Venetian*, a greater *Architect* than the *Undertakers* of *Towers* and *Pyramids*, if I am not mistaken, has built a Town of fifty Leagues in compass, and in it placed 10000 Bridges of so monstrous a height, the greatest Vessels under Sail might pass commodiously under the Arches. A Town so Great and Magnifick, better Merits to be placed in that fine World, *Lucian*, more Happy than *Columbus*, first discover'd in the Globe of the Moon.

You may see others follow a Method very different from this, that have so much Care their Works should not favour the Air of a *Cloister*, or touch upon the Legend for all the World, they will not mention any Miracle whatsoever. The Heathen Authors have been more Religious and more Faithful, and have had more Zeal for their False Gods, far from suppressing the Events by which their Power and Might is made known, they repeat them till they are rendred disagreeable. In *Livy* and *Tacitus* you will find nothing at the beginning and end of every Year, but *Prodigies* and *Expiations* of them. And shall a Christian Writer, to preserve the Reputation of a great Wit, or avoid the Railery of a few *Libertines*, leave out the Relations that are as Witnesses of his Faith, and Proofs of the Power and Providence of that God he adores? As if it were more the Mark of Sense, and for the Interest



terest of Mankind, to recite the Cruelties of one Prince, and the Debauches of another, than the Wonderful Works by which God is pleased from time to time to awaken our Faith.

*Josephus* the Jew has given the first Example of this sort of Infidelity, to make his Court to the *Roman Princes* in whose Reigns he writ, as *Leon Castrius* has remark'd. He has suppressed, disguised or weakned the Wonders done in the time of his Fore-fathers, as if he feared the God of *Sion* should appear more Puissant and Great in the Eyes of the *Gentiles*, than the Gods of the *Capitol*. That *Miraculous Meteor* that was during so many Years Conductor of the *Jews*, sometimes a *Cloud*, sometimes a *Pillar of Fire*, appears not in his History; where his evil Faith has dissipated it, for fear it should give Offence to the sight of the *Gentiles*. 'Tis true, he has not suppressed the passage of the *Red Sea*; but in the

manner he speaks of it, he leaves a Doubt, whether the strange Road by which the People passed, was made by some natural cause, or by vertue of some Power Superior to Nature. And after comparing this Miraculous Event, with what arrived to the Great *Alexander* when marching into *Persia*, he passed the Sea of *Pamphilia*, he leaves every one to believe what they please of one and the other; shewing enough by this Prophane Ambiguity, they were of equal weight, or none at all in his belief. His Prevarication is yet more bold, and his evil Faith more open, in what regards the passage of *Jourdan*. The Holy Scripture tells us in express terms, That as soon as the Priests that carried the Ark had set their feet in the Water, one part of the River returned towards the Spring, the other towards the Sea, and the People passed over dryshod. *Josephus* finds the Miracle so strong, and yet of so little Credit, that

that to reduce it to an Appearance that better pleases his Palate than the Truth, he tells you that three days after God made the Promise, the *Waters* of *Jourdan* being abated, the People passed over the Shallow. And because from the words of the Scripture one cannot figure any thing more *Marvellous*, he adds the Troop of Women and Children were ranged in the midst of the People to prevent their being carried away by the Rapidity of the Current. What has he done with the Burning Mountain that made the Waters return to their Source? Where has he placed the twelve Stones set upon the Shore in Memory of so great a Miracle? He Suppresses all that, to conserve the Reputation of a *Judicious Historian*; and had rather be esteemed *Prevai-ricator* amongst the *Jews*, than *Fabulous* with the *Romans*. In all this it may be said, he has made as many *Apostasies* as *Falsities* against the Holy Scripture. He ceases not never-  
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theless to continue in Esteem, because of those that value him, some are ignorant of his Unfaithfulness; and others trouble not themselves, loving rather a Falsity well disguised, than a plain Truth.

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### C H A P. VIII.

*Whether Private Actions may be made use of in History? And what ought to be those received.*

**I**T may be here demanded, whether *Private Actions* may not have place in *History*, without derogating from her Dignity? 'Tis answered, Instructing the Readers, and Profit of the Publick, being the Rule by which an *Historian* ought to judge of things that are used in the Structure of his Edifice, without Scruple he may admit of *Private Actions*, where he remarks  
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some strong and lively Character of Justice, Valour, Moderation, or Continnence Extraordinary. Because such *Actions* are the *Pictures* with which the *Temple of History* ought to be imbellished; and those that enter this Temple, make Rules and Lessons from the sight of these Pictures.

As for *Actions* that have nothing of noble, but are of low and mean Nature, what should they do in *History*? Of what use would they be? Let Gaming, Hunting and Dancing be far from her: 'Twould be more seemly to see in a Temple or Palace, the Signs of Shops in the room of Hangings and Pictures. Not but that Princes may sometimes permit such things; but there is difference between what may and what ought to be done; between Indulgence and Obligation. And it must be remembred, 'tis *Obligation*, and not *Indulgence*, distinguishes a Prince from a Particular. *Alexander* lov'd the *Pleasure* of a good Table,

*Table*, and *Julius Cesar* hated not the *Ladies*; but it was not at *Table* *Alexander* acquired the *Sir-name* of *Great*; nor did the first *Cesar* make himself Master of the Empire in the *Closet* of *Cleopatra*.

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## C H A P. IX.

*Whether the Law of Truth obliges the Historian to keep nothing to himself? Whether nothing be owing to the publick Vertue and good Example? Whether 'tis not better to Suppress the Vices of the Great, than publish them.*

Here remains to examine, whether an *Historian* can in Conscience, and without Scandal, bloody and defile his Paper with infinite Cruelties and Filth, to which he will be obliged, in case he observes the second Rule, *To hold nothing from the Truth*. If I may be credited,



credited, all these things ought to be Sacrificed to the *Innocence* of *History*, and the publick Vertue.

First, *History* that ought to be the *Governess* of *Life*, and *Guide* of our *Actions*, becomes a *Scandalous Governess*, a *Dissolute Guide*, by the ill Examples she exposes ; that have so much more weight the higher they descend. Is there a more Infamous School of Vice, a more Villainous place of Scandal, and more Dangerous, than the *History* of the *Twelve Cæsars* writ by *Suetonius* ? And without mounting so high, have we not lately seen with what Boldness the publick Vertue has been violated by a Scandalous *Detracting History*, that was introduced into all the *Closets* and *Streets*, and sullied with its Filth, even the Spouse of *Jesus Christ* ? How many Maids and Women, by the reading of this *Petronius Travesty*, have ceased to be what they were before, and said after the Example of the young *Debauchee* in the *Comedy* men-

mentioned by St. *Austin*, *Why should not I do as such a Dutcheſs, What ſuch a Princeſs has done? Owe I more to my Conſcience, more to my Reputation, than they owe to theirs?* And by what right ſhall Vertue, ſo free in a Palace, be conſtrain'd in a Private Houſe?

Secondly, The Pen gives no right to meddle with the Reputation of others. If Detraction of one Perſon from another, be a Sin againſt the Laws of Charity and Juſtice, what will be that of an Hiſtorian, that is a publick Perſon, made in the ſight and hearing of all People and all Ages?

On the other ſide, *Truth* being to *History* as *Form* to *Matter*, if the half be taken away, if Liberty be not given him to unfold all that he finds true under his Hands, ſhe will be but half form'd, the Hiſtorian half mute, half lame, and not able to acquit but one half of his Duty.

Reſides,

## Of History. 109

Besides, *History*, as has been said, is a *Philosophy* free from the Difficulty and Perplexity of Arguments, but rich in Examples, that concludes with more Right, and persuades with more Force. And this Force of Perswasion is not only from good Examples; the ill exposed and well imploy'd, have the same Effect; nay, work sometimes more quick, whether because an evil Action is more lively and penetrating than a good; or that Man being more sensible of Shame than Honour, wants greater speed to Glory, than to help him fly Infamy. Who has not heard the Custom amongst the *Spartans*, to make the Extravagant Actions of their Drunken Servants, Lessons of Temperance to their Children. And how many Princes have been kept within the bounds of Duty, by the Eternal Chastisement they have seen the Evil suffer upon the *Theatre of History*.

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There is a third Reason, that proves it the Duty of an Historian, to be as free in declaring the Vices as Vertues of great Persons: He is Judge, and Judgment reaches the Bad as well as the Good: His Function is a publick Witness, and 'tis the part of a Witness to conceal nothing. And in fine, 'Tis the publick Interest, that great Men and Princes, to whom the *Laws* are but *Cobwebs*, should have some Bridle to stop them. And to a People that take *Religion* for a *Fantasm*, and *Hell* for a *Bugbear* to frighten Children, we cannot propose any thing stronger, than the *Eternal Infamy* is prepared for them in *History*.

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## C H A P. X.

*That the Right of History permits the Historian all sorts of Truth. The Rules to be observed in the use of this Right; with Conscience and Honour, and without Scandal and Prejudice to the Publick Vertue.*

**I**T is my Opinion upon these Reasons, An *Historian*, as *Publick Witness* and *Judge*, has the right of Evidencing the *Bad* as the *Good*, and to judge of one and the other. But he must be careful not to make his *Sovereign Right* a *Sovereign Injustice*; to make of it a *Right of Calumny and Detraction*. And to the end he may use it with *Innocence and Desert*, he must above all things, particularly apply himself to distinguish the *False* from the *True*; the *Certain* from the *Uncertain*; and the *Private* from the *Publick*. This Distinction presupposed,

supposed, First he must reject all sorts of Falsities, and guard himself from imposing any thing, whether he himself speaks, or another for him. An ordinary Artifice in Calumniating Writers, who to distribute more boldly their Impositions, lend them to others they introduce in the Scene. He that does after this manner, deserves to have the *Mask* taken off, and be paid in the same false Coin he pays others.

Secondly, He must not deliver any thing that is Doubtful or Uncertain, but impose this Retention upon himself by the Christian Law, forbidding such a Distribution upon severe Damage, whether it be upon the Reputation of those he rashly Censures, or the Conscience of those to whom he gives reason of Scandal, and to judge indiscreetly. Let him Praise as much as he pleases the Doubtful and Uncertain; what mistake he may make on this side, being to the Injury of



no body, none will reproach him, no Process be entred against him, and the Wise will be of his Opinion: If finding himself in these Circumstances, he chooses the more favourable for his Neighbour, and hazards a doubtful Truth for an assured Charity; but when he falls upon Censure, he must remember Uncertainty dispences not with the Respect he owes his Neighbours Reputation; and that he cannot sully it, though agreeable to Fame, without violating the common right, and doing a publick Injustice.

By the same reason, Let him know he is prohibited from looking too curiously into other Peoples Concerns, to enter the Closets, lift up the Vails, and draw the Curtains that cover the Secrets of Families, and search wherewithall to entertain the Curiosity of some always covetous of Novelties, and ready for Detraction. His Prerogative reaches not Secret things, that  
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are in regard to him as if they were not ; and Detraction calls for Reparation, and Subjects to Punishments, as well as Calumny. And if the Church her self, to whom the Son of God committed the Keys, assumes not the Authority of opening what is shut, and judging of hidden things, much less ought it to be allowed History. To attribute to her self any thing like it, the Consequence would be dangerous: No place safe where this Evil would not penetrate, followed with ill *Presaging Birds*, no Reputation free from their *Venomous Bills*.

In the Fourth place, Since the Perfection of a Civil Life is the end where his Labours tends, he must expose nothing to the publick View that has not regard to it, must therefore abstain from all sorts of Scandalous Relations, as are those that serve but to make People lose the Respect they owe their Prelates and Princes, the Hierarchy, Church and publick Government; and gives  
way

way to Heresies, Revolts and Schisms, both in Church and State.

In the Fifth place, Where the Connexion of his Matters, and the Composure of his Works, obliges him to represent the Vices of any that will make a Figure in History; he must remember in such Representations, to spare as much as he can the publick Vertue; and not give any Colour, let fall any Expression, or leave any Image, that will offend her sight: It must suffice him to explain himself in such general Terms that cannot cause a Blush or evil Thought, and to touch them but in passing, and make hast away as from an infected place, where his own and others Modesty are in danger. *Salust, Titus Livius* and *Tacitus*, have in this a Retention of great Instruction and Example for Christian Writers: And 'tis marvellous to see with what respect those that adored *Vicious Gods*, have written of the *Vices of Men*; they seem to blush for Human Kind, and

and their words as a Vail cover their Shame as much as possible.

*Suetonius* is censured by all the World for the Impurity of his History, which is made an Accademy of Debauchery; but if *Suetonius* a Heathen is blamed for his Boldness, what must they say of a Christian that has made a French Copy of all these Latin Obscenities; introduced into the Streets, and Closets of great Ladies, those Monsters of Impurity? And how will this Translator cleanse himself before God, from all the Filth with which he has sullied his Imagination and Hands, and perhaps the Modesty and Conscience of those that an evil Curiosity has carried to those Infamous Sights.

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Dissertation IV.

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## C H A P. I.

*That the Historian has Right to Judge of Things and Actions. Of the Faults he must avoid in the use of this Right ; And first of Rashness.*

JUDgment that follows the Narration of things, is the second part of History; and this though the less in *Mass*, ought not to be the least in *Wit*. 'Tis here the Knowledge of Good and Evil must be unfolded; the Politick and Moral have their place; that Vertue is crown'd and Vice punish'd; that the Historian (hardly otherwise more

more than a *Tale-teller*) becomes a *Statesman* and a *Soldier*; makes himself *Judge* of *Princes* and their *Ministers*; and *Arbitrator* of their good and evil *Actions*: 'Tis here he gives *Instructions* and *Counsels*, *Degrees* of *Honour* and *Infamy*, establishes a *School* for the time to come, and a *Tribunal* for the past.

The Reason, Opinion and Example, of great Men, of right belong to the Historian, contrary to those would reduce him to the simple Function of a *Gazetteer*. Because History (as has been said more than once) is a kind of *Civil Philosophy*, and her proper Office is to instruct the *present* by the *past*: And how shall she acquit herself of that Office, if the right of *Judging*, if the use of *Reflection* were taken from her. 'Tis by that she distinguishes Good from Evil; that she makes *Applications* of good and evil *Actions*; and shews the way ought to be held and avoided.



avoided. Without that she is of  
no greater Service than a *Gazette*;  
and *Polybius* speaks but as a Come-  
dian. *Cicero*, that has drawn her  
Picture more exactly in three Lines,  
than others have done in gross Vo-  
lumes, contents not himself the  
Historian should unfold the Coun-  
cils and Motives that precede Acti-  
ons, he will have him declare what  
he judges of one and the other.  
And have we not *Historians* that  
have performed this Duty: Those  
that oppose the *Commentaries* of  
*Cesar*, ought to observe this is the  
Duty but of a *True History*, that  
*Commentaries*, *Journals*, *Memoirs*  
and *Registers*, are dispenced with.  
This Law so generally observed,  
ceases not to be difficult to keep;  
and I know no part of History  
ought to be managed more *adroitly*  
and with more *fineness*. That the  
Historian may not then act Tumul-  
tuously, and without Method, to  
the end his Judgments may not  
be judged, or at least favourably,  
let

let him have a care to secure them free from Rashness, Malice, Importunity and Disagreement. He will avoid *Rashness*, if he submit to the *Government of Prudence*, that will never permit him to pronounce, but upon an entire Knowledge, whether of the Grounds and Events of Affairs, or the Motives by which they have moved, and the Rounds they have been made take. He that ventures to judge by the Outside and Shew, Subjects himself to great Contempt; and if there wants but a false Light or Colour to give another Face, and make another Appearance, what would be the Imprudence and Rashness of a Writer, that gives definitive Judgments upon one of these Lights or Colours that first strike his sight.

If there be *Rashness* in judging Humane things by the outside; what Indiscretion will that Writer be guilty of, who having not the least Tincture of Theology, seen but

but the outside of Schools where she teaches, thinks himself able to penetrate Secrets the Cherubims cover with their Wings; dare make Decisions where the Doctors are in Difference, and pronounce boldly for the one against the other; and turn the Keys of St. Peter, and the Authority of his *Successors*; and submit to the Capacity of his weak Head the highest of all Crowns. At the sight of such an idle Rashness, will they not cry out against the *Prophane*, that dares put his Hand to the *Ark*; against the *Owl* that has the boldness to enter that Light, where the *Eagles* themselves are dazled.

And when any one finds himself enlightned enough to judge the Affairs of the World, he must not do it in the Nature of a *Decree* or manner decisive; it will be well to do it in doubtful Terms, and after the Sceptical way, that having no defence for the cer-

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tainty

tainty of things, judge but by their Appearances. As long as he holds within these bounds, no body can reproach him of ill; and his Judgments will not be subject to disanulling; but in the Affairs of his Knowledge, and of which he has seen the Springs and Movements; he may leave Expressions of Doubt and Conscience, and propose his Judgments affirmatively, provided he does not mingle the Venom of Malice.

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## C H A P. II.

Of Malice in judging the Frailty of all Men. The Care an Historian ought to take to preserve himself from it. Of the Brevity required. Reflections upon Philip Commines.

**M**ALICE is a Fault the Historian must avoid with Care, and yet whether *Corrupted Nature* renders our *Judgments* evil by the same means she does our *Wills*, or by the *Artifices* of *Self-love* we are as easily perswaded to the Prejudice of another as our own Advantage; or whether yet the Vanity of *Malicious Interpretations*, that seem to come from a greater degree of Light than others, are more pleasing to Humane Wit; 'tis hard for an Historian to defend himself from the Flattery of this *Malicious Address*, to find the Imperfections of every thing, and incline it to evil. *Salust*

and *Tacitus* are particularly accused of this Fault; and *Tacitus* has yet the Misfortune above *Salust*, that Wits the most Fertile in Sinister Interpretations and Malicious Commentaries, acknowledge him for their Master.

An *Historian* must not only avoid *Malice*, the mark of a Spirit as full of Venom as the Serpent said to Poison all he look'd on, but in Affairs where Uncertainty and Obscurity leave some place for Indulgence; he must rest his Conjectures upon Colours the most safe, and Appearances the most Vertuous, and form a Judgment as favourable as the thing will suffer. And by that, besides that it will get him the Reputation of an Honest Man, which is not less necessary for an *Historian* than an *Orator*, 'twill secure his Person and Work from publick Hatred and private Envy.

But whatever way he judges, he must take care that his Judgments be given in few words; and remember



ber that a *Preaching Historian* cannot but be tedious to his Reader that hasts to a new Subject. *Salust*, *Livy* and *Tacitus*, are marvellous in this way : *Philip Commynes*, that never saw them, had no care to imitate them : His Judgments nevertheless are all good Sence, though drawn out too long ; and the Examples he adds, though Just enough, are not after the Models of Antiquity. But that was no part of his Furniture, and as often as he entertains me, methinks I hear an Honest Gentleman, who after the Cloth is taken away, falls a reciting the Passages he remembers in his Travels,

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## C H A P. III.

*The Regard an Historian ought to have to his Birth, Religion and Life.*

**T**O these three Advices I add a fourth that is not less necessary, nor of less Consequence to the Conscience and Reputation of an *Historian*, that he has regard to his *Birth, Religion and Life*. Though the *Tribunal of History* be *Sovereign*, and the greatest Persons are there *Sovereignly* judged, he must not forget notwithstanding the *Respect* due to the *Memory* of those *Princes* have governed his Native Country. And if the Instruction of their *Successors*, and the Truth of History, will have him pronounce upon their Conduct, he must not spare Censure where they have deserved it: But he must abstain, without Necessity or Profit, making a Scandalous Spectacle in the

the Eyes of the People of their Secret Debauches. Above all, not to condemn them from the Voice of the Vulgar, always Enemy and Calumniator of their Masters; or from the Voice of Fame, always Detractor and Lyar; or from his own ill Disposition: It may be with an Illness not unlike the *Yellow Jaundice*, where they think every thing *Yellow* they see. What I say is occasioned by *Henry the Third*, who more Unhappy, and more decried from the *Vices* of his Age than his own, has been unworthily blackned by the *Historians* of the *League* and *Hugonots*; and more unworthily yet, by those that have collected the Impostures of one and the other, and thrown them upon his Memory.

But if something be due to his *Birth*, much more to his *Religion*: This Duty being the first and most Obliging, when he is to write of the Church, and Ecclesiastical Princes, the Court of *Rome* and  
G. 4                      Popes,

Popes, Clergy and Religious, he must not make his *Historick Liberty* a ground for *Licentiousness*. I confess there is always Weakness where there is Humanity; that all those that approach the Sanctuary, are not Saints; nor all those that are near the Altar, Cherubims: But does it belong to an *Historian* to judge his Judges, to condemn those have a Jurisdiction to which the Angels themselves are Subject. 'Tis much the same, as if the Serjeants should cite the Judges of the Court to the Bar, and pretend to make their Process. And what Conscience has an *Historian*, that writes of *Popes* and *Cardinals*, as if he writ from the *Memoirs* of *Beza*, as if hired by the Booksellers of *Amsterdam* and *Geneva*.

In the third place, He must have regard to his *Life*. If he would not be slighted by his *Readers*, he must make an Agreement between his *Judgments* and his *Manners*, his *Reputation* and his *Pen*. Let not a  
*Libertine*

*Libertine* make himself *Severe*, or a *Debauche* preach *Sobriety* and *Continence*, such like *Sermons* are turn'd into Ridicule, and the least they say of the Preacher is, he would do better at a Table than in the Pulpit. The Disagreement cannot be pardoned in *Salust*, what he says against the Corruption and Disorders of his Age, cannot be better said, but he ought to have left it to *Cato*, or some other that valued himself for ancient Discipline. And in my opinion, a *Declamation* against *Luxury* and *Profuseness* of Life, was not a less Incongruity in the History of *Salust*, accused of *Debauchery* by the *Censor* in full *Senate*, and twice of *Adultery* before the *Pretor*, than had been in the *Commentaries* of *Cesar*, an *Invective* against *Ambition* and *Government*.

## C H A P. IV.

*Of Elogies and Characters of Illustrious Persons; in what Places they ought to be put.*

**E***Logy* and *Censure* are the Principal Parts of *Judgment*, and the *Historian* that forgets them in some Occasions, is accountable to the Publick: They are usually placed either after the Relation of some signal Action of great Fame, or at the Death of Persons that have most appeared, and made the greatest Figure in the Theatre of History. And this hinders not, but they may also find a place, where the *Historian* prepares himself for Relations of great Account. *Salust*, *Livy* and *Tacitus* often use them after this manner, The first begins his two Histories by the Characters of *Catalin* and *Jugurth*, that were the Principal Actors



Actors in these two Pieces. The Second by *Hannibal*, before he placed him at the Head of the *Carthaginians*, and let him loose as a Torrent descending from the *Alps* upon *Italy*. The Third being, To introduce *Vespasian* and *Mutius*, that were to be the Authors of a new Revolution in the Empire, gave the Character of one and the other in such a manner, the most Faithful and most exact Pencil could not have arrived to. But these Pictures ought not to be in great, two or three Colours and as many touches are enough; and less must they be made at Fancy, and drawn Beautiful when Ugly, or on the contrary. And as Truth permits not the *Historian* should do more for any Person, than Vertue and Nature have done; neither does she allow him to rob any one of the Advantages they have received from them; an *Historian* is usually the Drawer of this sort of Picture, and sometimes

times contents himself with *designing* only, and commits the Finishing to other Persons, to whom he lends his Colours, and makes speak in his place. And this Prudence is principally used when he has nothing to represent but Faults and Censure to put into his Representations. I ought not to forget telling you in this place, that our *Strada* in his *History* of the *Wars* of *Flanders*, has drawn Figures of greater *Proportion* than the ancient Models: In these Figures (the Abridgments of Life) he recites many things Curious and Singular, that gives a perfect Knowledge of the Man, leaves no particular in the Dark, of his Birth, Education, Conduct or Fortune. The *Portraits* he has made of *John d' Austria*, *Margret* of *Parma*, Cardinal *Granvill*, Duke of *Alva*, Prince of *Orange*, and some others, are after this manner: And the Approbation they find amongst the  
most

most polished Wits make me believe it will not be disagreeable to *France*, to see the like in the History I have undertaken.

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Disserta-

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Dissertation V.  
Of Sentences.

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C H A P. I.

*That History demands Sentences:  
What are Sentences; and the  
Kinds.*

**I** Cannot think to finish my purpose without treating of *Sentences*, or if only in passing with a stroke of my Pen. In *History* and in *Poetry*, throughout which they are found, they make so great an *Eclat*, and pierce too lively, not to make themselves regarded. I know they offend some *chagrin* People, and are censured  
by

by the Severe. But is there any thing so good, against which some ill Nature will not bring an Objection? There are that Fancy the *Poppy* and hate the *Rose*: Nay, the *Graces* themselves have their Enemies; and some-body, finding nothing to blame in the Person of *Venus*, reprehended her Drefs. We will not then reject Sentences, upon the Condemnation the *Chagrin* and Severe pass upon them: Their ill Nature ought not to prevail above the Reason, Example and Authority of the Fathers of History; who often make use of them: Nor must we abandon our selves to the Excess and Liberty of some that abuse them.

But because many take for Sentences certain little playing with words, either ambiguous, opposite or sharp, which seem to comprehend much and have nothing in them; 'tis here necessary to disabuse those People, and teach those that may be Ignorant, A Sentence after  
*Aristotle,*

*Aristotle, is a general Proposition that declares what there is of Good to be followed, or Ill to be avoided.* According to this Definition received by all the Masters, as on the one hand, all that they say of a particular, though never so well pointed, with never so much Wit, cannot be called a *Sentence*; so on the other, They must not place in the Rank of Sentences, General Maxims, and Universal Axioms of Sciences, out of the reach of Morality.

There are then (to take the Matter after this Definition) but two Kinds of true *Sentences*, The one *Simple*, and made of one Proposition; the other *Composed*, and made of two; the first of which is supported by the second; and both together, according to *Aristotle*, make an *Enthymeme* or half Syllogism. For Example, If I say 'tis hard to detain Fortune and get the Mastery of her: This Universal and Moral Proposition, but alone and without a Second, makes but a Simple Sentence;



tence; but if I add a Second that supports it, and say Fortune, naked and slippery as she is, remains a Prize to none, but easily escapes the Hands of all that would retain her: A Sentence composed after this sort will be double; and such Sentences *Aristotle* call *Enthymemes*, because the second Proposition being placed before the first, and joyn'd by the Particle *then* which they call Illative, is made a Regular Argument and rightly formed.

'Tis fit notwithstanding we should know, that Sentences, which are evident, and have a Clearness in themselves, have no need of a second Proposition to explain them; that would be to light the day, and read before the Sun with a Candle. But those that are not very clear nor certain, that lean to the *Equivocal* and *Paradox*, carry some apparent Contradiction, and enter the Understanding with Difficulty, must not be left without the help of a Second, that may  
make

make their entrance more easie, by giving them a Clearness and Support. That old Sentence, *A Covetous Man wants as much the things he possesses, as those he possesses not*, is very true; but because, in the Terms that compose it, there is an Opposition that obscures the Truth, there must be a second Proposition that may unfold and make it understood; *The Covetous enjoying as little what they have, as what they have not*; 'tis true to say they want one as much as the other.

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## C H A P. II.

Of the Use of Sentences; And the Rules to be observed.

**T**HIS Knowledge presupposed, we may proceed to the use of Sentences; in which there are four Principal Rules to be observ'd, *Sobriety, Discretion, Justice and Gravity.* They must be used *Soberly* and seldom, not with the Intemperance of those are Angry if any thing falls from their Mouths or Pen but what is Picquant and Sententious. A *Poem, Discourse or History*, with such a Stile, could not be better compared than to a Garden, where all the *Trees* were *Hollies*, and *Herbs* *Thistles*.

A *Sentence* has been called the Seasoning of a Stile, it must be used then but by Grains, not made a Feast of. And since the Composure and easie fullness, by which she enters  
so

so agreeably the Ears and Sense, is broken by this fall of Sentences, without Connexion one upon the other. 'Tis like the stile a *Roman Prince* reproached *Seneca* with, *An Amass of Materials without Cement*. To which may be added, Nature suffers not Precious things to grow in heaps, nor Excellence to be found in a Multitude. And the greatest number of these perpetual Retailers of them, expose for the most part Doublets for Diamonds, and *Venetian Pearls* for those of the *East*.

*Sobriety* suffices not; but to the right use of *Sentences*, there must be in the second place a great *Discretion* to chose the Persons to whom they are lent, and Places where they are to be employed. In the Choise of the Persons, the Historian must have regard to the Age, Sex, Quality and Rank they have held: And as he must not lend them to Young People, nor the Vulgar, so not to Women unless to a *Livia*, *Zenobia*, *Mamilla*, *Pulcheria*, *Eudoxia*,  
and

and others such-like, who have wherewithall to sustain the Grandeur of their words, their Actions, and that of their Dignity. Those that are not of this Rank, ought to hold their Peace, and the *Historian* must not permit them to speak much, if it be not on occasions where some singular Event or Violence forces a sensible Resentment. The *Criticks* are displeased with those *Euripides* sends a Nurse; and those spoke by a Servant in *Plautus*, are paid with Injuries. Let the *Historian* reserve them then for Men, whose Authority, Experience and Quality, have the weight they demand. A *Sentence* is a *Dogme* of *Morality* or *Policy*, a *Precept* *shortned into three words*; and we expect not such things from a Page or Follower, from the Pen of a Young Gallant, or old Debauchee. Grave Persons, whether with the weight of Years, Office or Dignity, have only right to Dogmatise, give Lessons and Precepts. And do not we see in the

Book

Book of *Job*, that one of his Friends, a great Speaker of *Axioms*, is reprehended by God, that being Ignorant and ill instructed, he affected to wrap up a heap of undigested Sentences in a flux of words without Art or Order.

The *Discretion* of an *Historian* ought to extend to the Choise of *Persons* and *Places* where they are to be put. They are Ornaments I confess, but cease to adorn where they are in Confusion. Gold, Precious Stones and Pearls have their places upon the Body and Cloaths; Freizes, Cornishes and Sculptures in Palaces and Temples; and out of those places they would be Monstrous and offend the Sight. And I dare say, *Quintilian* that said Sentences were to Eloquence as Eyes to the Body, did not intend a Body all Eyes from Head to Foot. Their Ordinary places are Harangues, where they may be display'd with greater Liberty and Judgment; where they serve to confirm what they



they pronounce or decide. *Elogies* upon Eminent Persons, *Reflections* made, and *Instructions* given after the Relation of some great Action or extraordinary Event.

But it must be remembred, they ought not to be introduced by force and as fixed in those places; they must be found as it were by chance, without Force, Affectation or looking for, in such a manner, that in the Composure of the stile, they may appear rather as *Shadows* arising from the *Dye*, than *Laces* sew'd upon the *Stuff*: And in this consists the Justice which in the third Rule the *Historian* must observe in the *Use* of *Sentences*.

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## C H A P. III.

*Another Important Rule to be observed in the Use of Sentences, to the Exclusion of Points contrary to the Gravity of History. Seneca wrongfully censured for that by Quintilian.*

THE last Rule is Gravity, which permits not the *Historian* to retail himself, or lend to whomsoever he makes speak, any Sentence that has not Weight and Substance, is not Solid and Serious. By this Rule he must abstain from playing with *Antitheses*, *Equivocals*, *Allusions*, and certain *Periods*, that are, as *Petronius* calls them, but as shinings of broken Glass, they prick and shine, and withall, that there is nothing weaker nor less solid. *Quintilian* compares them sometimes to the Sparks that twinkle in the Smoak; and sometimes to little Flowers,

Flowers, that being of no consistence, fall so soon as touch'd : And 'tis that, it may be, a worthy Man means, when he calls them the *Emmonies* of words.

The *Controversies* of old *Seneca*, *Declamations* falsely attributed to *Quintilian*, the *Panegyricks* of the latter Empire are stiffened throughout with these Points ; and if the Expressions of *Tertullian* are said to be Iron and Stone, one may well say these are Nettles and Briars. *Bertaud* the most *Pointilleux* of all the Poets, was called the *Thistle* : He affected not to make a *Stanza* that was not sharp as an *Epigram*. *Longinus*, *Hermogenes*, *Quintilian*, and other Masters of Rhetorick have always protested against this Corruption ; and particularly *Quintilian* is every where out of Humour with *Seneca*, and accuses him as an Empirick in Eloquence. But if we should take his Opinion, Process would be taken out against him, as a Corrupter of Youth,

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and he banished the Schools and Libraries with as much Ignominy, as the Poets are banished the Republick of *Plato*.

But I cannot avoid saying (what Respect I may otherwise have for *Quintilian*) he makes himself in this too much a School-master; whether his *Criticisms* proceed from Jealousie, or a Peevish Temper, he declaims against *Seneca's* to ill Purpose, and without reason, and follows the Humour of Pedant Philosophers, always opposing those of the Court. But whatever was the cause with *Seneca*, Serious and Grave throughout; 'tis certain there is nothing more contrary to the Dignity of *History*, and Importance of Matters she handles, than this Madnes of playing with little words. The *Historian* is an Interpreter of Truth, and Teacher of Civil Life, Director and Counsellor of Princes, an Instructor and Guide to Posterity; and if he should amuse himself with such Trifles, that are only to be bore with

with in Children, Declamators and Scholars of Sophists, it would be as seemly to see a Feather in the Cap of a Senator : And since 'tis Princes, Statesmen, Generals and Ambassadors he makes speak, what he lends must be Richer and more Substantial.

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C H A P. IV.

*That a Point in Thoughts is different from Force. An Example of the Force of Thoughts. Of Instructions and Precepts, and how to be used.*

**T**Here is yet a Distinction to be made between the *Point* and the *Force*, whether in Thoughts or Expressions. There are certain Bold Thoughts effectually explain'd, certain Expressions flowing from bright Conceptions, yet with a restrain'd Light, as in a Point, by

which are represented in little things of the greatest Grandeur without Diminution. These Thoughts, these Expressions, these Images, belong to Wits of the first Rank. And far from rejecting them with ill Points, we ought to respect them as the Lights of Stars, whether they come from their Nature, or the Intelligences that inhabit them. As we respect those *Precious Stones*, in which *Pliny* tells you the Majesty and Riches of Nature are abridg'd; *Seneca* (notwithstanding *Quintilian*) the old *Pliny*, and *Tacitus*, are rich throughout with this sort of Riches; and a few Lines taken out of *Tacitus* may serve for Example of this remass'd Force, this contracted Grandeur, of which we speak. In the Life of his Father *Agricola*, which in my Judgment is the greatest Effort of his Wit, he introduces a *British Captain* speaking against the *Romans* in these words. *These Robbers of all the World, now the Exhausted Lands can no more furnish their*



*their Rapine, think to Rife the Seas :  
 Where they meet with Opulent Enemies,  
 they are Cruel through Covetousness :  
 Where with Poor, through Ambition.  
 The East and West, vast as they are,  
 cannot satisfie ; they alone with like  
 greediness throw themselves upon the  
 Poverty and Riches of Nations. All  
 they aim at is but to Ravage and De-  
 stroy, to Ravish the Empire under  
 false Pretensions : Yet they Vaunt to  
 have established Peace in Provinces  
 they themselves have rendred Desolate.  
 If the Modesty of our Wives and Sisters  
 saved them from Violence, when they  
 were our Enemies : It cannot now they  
 are become our Guests from their Las-  
 civious Friendship. Slaves, that Nature  
 and Fortune destined to Servitude,  
 having once sold themselves, are nou-  
 rished by their Masters. 'Tis Brittain  
 only buys her Slavery, Supports and  
 Nourishes her Oppressors. These are  
 Lightnings that dazle the Sight,  
 Thunders that Astonish ; and if  
 Nature had given the use of Rea-  
 son to Lyons, they would thus*

have expressed their Anger and Indignation.

Here I should speak of *Instructions* and *Precepts*, that are not less the Office of an *Historian* than *Sentences*; but having the same End and Form, and being under the same Definition, what I have said of *Sentences*, may comprehend them also. The use of them must be as Sober, Moderate and Restrain'd, and the Historian that would not leave his Instructions subject to the Censure of the Grave and Wise, must have the same Discretion and Regard in the Management of them.

I shall only say in the Matter of *Precepts*, the best and least Pedantick way is the Oblique. When the Historian, not willing to make himself a Tutor in the Eyes of the World, lends them to another: By this Innocent Artifice, accommodated to Mens Fancy, that values more things at a distance, than near at hand, the Reader, that per-  
haps

haps may pass by what the *Historian* says in his own Person, will receive with Esteem by the Mediation, and as from the Hand of some Prince, Statesman, or others he sees hold some considerable Rank in History.

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Dissertation VI.  
Of Descriptions.

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C H A P. I.

*Of the Worth of Description; And  
some Rules the Historian ought to  
observe.*

**D***escriptions* will here have their place after *Sentences*, and it would not be Just (they doing so much Honour to History as sometimes they do) if they had not a part in this Treatise. As they are *Representations* and *Paintings* made by Words, it may be said they are in *Poetry* and *History*, as *Hangings* and *Pictures* in a *Palace*.

But

But we must not perswade our selves, they being upon Paper and without Colour, the Representation is less perfect: 'Tis quite another sight, to see a Combat or Wrack drawn by the *Pen* and *Stile* of *Virgil* and *Livy*, than to see it done by the *Pencil* of *Raphael* himself or *Titian*. The Pen represents not only the Colours and Features of the Body, it represents the Thoughts and Passions of the Mind, gives Life and Action, Speech and Understanding to her *Figures*, and as those made by the *Pencil*, how Beautiful soever, are all without Spirit and Life, without Movements; those that are made by the Pen, although Invisible, move and stir themselves, War by Sea and Land, are Eloquent or Courageous, as the Workman pleases to Inspire them.

This in favour of *Descriptions*, that certain *Criticks* would take from History: But those are People that are pleased with nothing that is Pleasant; and were they let alone

with their *Chagrin*, they would pull the Stars from Heaven, and Eyes from our Heads. But *Descriptions*, how Beautiful soever we make them, must have their Rules, as all other beautiful things that cease to be so, when they cease to be governed. Let *Wariness* then be the first Rule in the use of *Descriptions*, and the *Historian*, though never so ready in this way of *Drawing*, must not pride himself to multiply them in *History*, and shew his Wit to the Prejudice of his Judgment. That which pleases in one season and place, pleases not always nor every where; and Rarity gives value to many things. We seldom admire the *Sun*, because she shews herself every day; when the *Comets*, that have nothing taking, but denounce what is Ill and Ungrateful, because they appear not every Year, draw the Eyes and Admiration of all the World.

And after all, *Descriptions* being but *Resting-places* as well for the  
*Historian*



*Historian* as the *Reader*, it would be very Ungenteel for the one, and unuseful for the other, to search Repose at every step. Besides a multitude of *Descriptions* would be a Confusion and Obstacle to the course of History; and the *Reader* being desirous of coming to an end, would suffer with Impatience these delays, notwithstanding the Care taken to embellish them. Let the *Historian* remember then, *Instructions* being the principal end of his Labour, to which *Descriptions* serve but little, and only by way of Ornament, he ought not to use them but when Prudence and Occasion require.

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## C H A P. II.

*Other Rules for Descriptions. Ovid censured: And of some Historians that have fail'd in these*  
 • Rules.

**B**UT let him take care in this, he does not as the Rich Covetous, who do profusely, and without measure, what is done but once a Year; 'tis not enough *Descriptions* are *seldom*, they must be *short*. The same Reasons of Confusion, Obstacle and Interruption, that forbid a *Heap and Crowding*; forbids also *Length* and *Extension*; chiefly when this Length runs upon things that make neither Substance nor Shadows; serve neither the Essence nor Accidents of Affairs.

And in this consists the third Rule, that forbids in any *Description* which is not to the purpose, works  
 not

not some great Effect, and is not worthy the Grandeur and Majesty of History. The Ancient Criticks despised *Ovid*, for that in a Description of the Deluge, where the Towns and People had equally suffered Wrack, when Forrests, Mountains and Earth, were drown'd, he mentions *Wolves that Swam with the Sheep without biting them*. How would they then have decried *Livy* or *Tacitus*, obliged by the Dignity of History to a more composed Gravity, if the like had escaped their Pens.

The less Severe Criticks of *Italy*, would not pardon one of their *Historians*, who in a long and troublesome Description of a Feast made at *Rome* for the King of *Navar's* Daughter, in her passage to Marry the Duke of *Ferrara*, leaving the Duty of an *Historian*, and taking upon him that of *Maistre d'Hostel*, obliges his Reader against his Will, to see the Account he gives of all the Services and Expence made at that Feast.

And

And shall we forgive an *Historian*, that having but a word to say, of the Magnificence with which the *Late King* was received at *Paris* in his return from *Rochel*; makes all the Wards march in Arms; counts the Ranks and Files of Companies; represents the Habits and Liveries of their Captains; their Colours and Feathers; and from thence enters by force the Town-hall, takes upon him to cover the Tables, to range the Dishes and Plates; after this goes to the *Greve*, describes the *Machines* and all the Fire-works, distributes the Wine, and lets off the *Fusees*. This unuseful Diligence could hardly be indured in a *Gazette-maker* who writes for Shops and Ale-houses.

By the same reason in describing of Battles, after ranging the Troops of one side and the other, he must not amuse himself to represent the Horses, Arms, Devices and Banners; to tell all the Thrusts made with



with Pikes and Swords, the Wounded and Kill'd, as the Poets do by the Rules of their Profession ; this were to confound the things ought to be distinguished, and mingle Poetry and History together. *Hammer* is very large in describing the Buckler of *Achilles* ; *Virgil* has outgone him in Wit, Judgment and Fame, by the Description of *Aeneas* his Arms, where is abridged all the *Roman History* : And to do yet more than *Homer*, he represents too the Symbols, the Chiefs of the *Latin Army* carried in their Bucklers and Helmets. *Ariosto* and *Tasso*, who followed their Method, have done the same ; and my self, by their Example, in my *St. Louis*, not only in the Tournament spoke of in the fourth Book, but in the Marching of Armies and Combats, to the end this Diversity of *Pictures* that are proper to Poetry, might enliven that matter, a Composure of the same Colour, and equal throughout, had rendred disagreeable.

These

These Beauties are not permitted the *Historian*, who serves *Muses* either more Serious or more Severe; and we know no body that has not in some measure abstained from it, if it be not that worthy Person that *Lucian* tells employ'd a whole Book in describing the Bridles and Trappings of *Vologezes* Horse, and another longer to represent the Figures he saw in the Buckler of another General.

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### C H A P. III.

*Other Rules necessary in Descriptions.*

*How and to what Degree they ought to approach Poetry. Apuleius censured, and his Stile.*

**A**Lthough these *Affected Descriptions* of Poetry be forbid the *Historian*, 'tis not to be understood, that in those proper for him and his

his Right, he is obliged to confine himself, and avoid all that belongs to a Poetick Fullness and Elevation: On the contrary, 'Tis in these places chiefly he ought to take Liberty, and unfold, as *Lucian* says, the Sail of History to the Poets Gale.

This Fourth Rule demands Vigor and Force of Spirit, to be observed as it has been by the Historians, who have had wherewithall to support the length of their Work, and extent of their Fame. I believe I have already said Versification excepted, *Salust*, *Livy* and *Tacitus* are not less Poets than *Homer* and *Virgil*. I may add, That if the Poetick Genius has sometimes warm'd their Fancy, it has been chiefly in *Descriptions*.

But the Force and Vigor this Rule requires, must be accompanied with Judgment and Discretion, as all others, for fear the *Vessel of History* (to speak again in *Lucian's* Phrase) pressed by the  
wind.

*wind of Poetry with too much Violence,* should split against some Rock, or be lost in some Barbarous Gulph. The Historian must above all shun the *Winds* that carry to the *Florides* of *Apuleius*. If there be an *Antipodes* to true *Latinism* and *Eloquence*; 'tis that Country where good Sense, Reason and Judgment are worse treated, than in that Famous Isle of Witchcraft, where Men are turn'd into Beasts. And yet this *Writer* has his *Imitators*, his *Golden-Afs-Adorers*, as well as the *Golden Calf*; when there is not a more *Villanous Animal*, not fit to be received into any Stables less foul than those of *Angens*. But is there any thing so bad, that pleases not some depraved Appetite? And tho' *France* has for some Years produced no Monsters, she has had heretofore her *Apuleius's*, notwithstanding she is at present freed from such Prodigies. If *Modes* as well as *Seasons* have their Revolution, who can promise the *Phæbus* of *Norvese*,  
and

and Gothick of *Vignere* will not return again, with the *Golillos* and *Ruffs* of those Times.

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C H A P. IV.

*The last Rule in Descriptions, and its Importance.*

FOR the sixth and last Rule, An Historian must not enter into any Country where he is Ignorant of the Language, without an Interpreter to assist him. I mean he must not undertake to describe any thing he does not know, or has not been informed of. Otherwise he will but form *Chimera's*, where he thinks to draw *Representations*: Speak of War in a Court-Style; and of *Navigation* in Terms of Husbandry: Will take the Country for the Soil; and when he has an Assault or Battle to describe, will do it in the words of a Proctor, who gives

gives an account of his Proceedings in the Pursuit of a Process.

In despite of the great and little *Atlas*, against Nature her self he will make a New World, and Maps as new; as those *lately* made for the Globe of the Moon: Place the *Lap.* and *Fin-landers* under the Line, and *Ethiopians* under the Pole; bring the *Pyramids* from *Egypt* into *Italy*, and carry the *Italian* Aque-ducts into *Egypt*: Not content to take away one side from the *Apenins*, he will transport it all into *Asia* or *Africk*.

Such-like Miracles have been done by *Historians* that were not *Saints*, if we believe *Lucian*, who says, That in his time there were that carried whole Towns out of one Country into another, with-as much ease as a Gard'ner Transplants his Flowers; and further make as *Prodigious Transformations* as those in *Ovid's Metamorphosis*, turn Towns into Captains, and Captains into Towns; for which the Marechal



*de Bassompierre* accuses one of our *Historiographers*; make Mountains Rivers, and Rivers Forrests; and without a Miracle or Witchcraft, without the help of Heaven or Hell, there is nothing in Nature he will not change from one Kind to another, by the sole Vertue of his Ignorance aided by his Fancy.

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Differta-

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## Dissertation VII.

## Of Harangues and Digressions.

## C H A P. I.

*Whether Harangues are Superfluons  
in History? And whether contrary  
to the Rule of Truth?*

**H**arangues hold the Third place in Composition of History; and if it belongs only to an Orator to be an *Historian*, as all the Masters say after *Cicero*, 'tis here chiefly the *Orator-Historian* ought to display his Rhetorick. I know all the World is not of his Opinion, but what is *Raymund Lully*, and others that imbrace

embrace the contrary, but *Pigmies* opposed to this *Achilles* of the long Robe. *Diodorus* of *Sicily* produced against *Harangues*, condemns but those that intangle and dismember a Narration, put things out of their Method by their unreasonable length, or number yet more tedious. And as this *Greek*, that ought to love Wine as all other *Greeks* do, would not have burnt down all the Vineyards to free the Ground from some bad Vines; so he never design'd to cleanse *History* from some ill *Harangues*, all sorts should be taken from her.

'Tis opposed to this, That the Law which permits nothing false in History, is violated by these *Harangues*, that are all false, and framed by the *Historian*: That Probability alledged to maintain them, is an Usurpation upon the *Poets*, and she shamefully abused. What is there of *Scythian* or *Barbarous*; nay, what is there not of Delicate and Polite in the *Harangues* the Ambassador of *Scythia*

*Scythia* made by the Favour of *Quintus Curtius* to the Great *Alexander*. And who can believe *Galgacus*, that *Tacitus* places at the head of a People separated from others, and as it were out of the World, *Harangued* with such Figures and Expressions as he lends him. The same may be said of his *Arminius* and *Civilis*, which he makes speak as if Disciples to *Longinus* and *Hermogenes*. In like manner, the *Romans*, covered with the Dust of their *Cabins*, and smelling of *Garlick*, as says a Modern Author, are produced by *Titus Livius* with as much fineness of Wit, and Grace of Language, as was used a long time after by the most Curious in the Court of *Augustus*.

C H A P. II.

*That Harangues are necessary in History, not contrary to Truth nor Probability. Historians and Poets justified thereupon.*

ALL these Reasons conclude nothing against *Harangues*. The *Law of Truth* ought not to be understood, but of things that receiving some consistence either by Tradition or Writing, might come entire and without Alteration to the Knowledge of the Historian; he is obliged to take them as they come to him by these ways, and the Law of Truth confines him, that without changing any thing either in Matter or Figure, he should make use of them such as they are. 'Tis not so with Words that have *Wings*, as a *Greek Poet* says, and after the *Arabian Conceit* are the *Birds of Carriage*, no Nets  
I can

can take them, no Bands hold them; and it would not be enough the Historian was a *Magician*, he must yet be a *Prophet*, if he was to recite every Syllable (as the Messengers of *Homer*) of all that was said by Persons introduced in his History; notwithstanding there are Occasions where 'tis necessary they should speak; for a *Trader* that is *Dumb*, a *Connfessor Silent*, an *Ambassador* without *Words*, would there make but strange *Figures*. The *Historian* must then make them *Speak*, and lend them *Words*, and that is found better than if they should all express themselves in different Languages, and renew the *Confusion* of *Babel* in every *History*.

In making *Harangues* the *Historian* *Usurps* not upon the *Poets*; there are that belong to each of them, but with this difference, the one is founded upon Truth to the Exclusion of Falshood; the other upon Falshood to the Exclusion of Truth,



Truth; because Falshood coloured and disguised, gives all the Honour to Poetry.

Two Famous Examples in History and Poetry, that deserve Observation, will clear better this Doctrine: The first in the Fourth Book of *Virgil's Æneids*, where *Dido*, moved by Love, Despire, Despair and Fury, whether she stirs or speaks, does all so probably, so well composed, so natural, one cannot see her without Loving, Hating, being in Anger, and Mourning with her. Notwithstanding this resemblance of Truth is grounded upon as great a Falshood as ever was. And it was not enough for *Virgil* to raise the Winds and Seas, employ all the Gods that preside over *Tempests*, to bring his *Æneas* to *Carthage* in the time of *Dido*, he was further obliged to force *Chronology*, and do Violence to two Ages.

The other in the First Book of *Livy*, where the Fair and Chast

*Lucretia*, Mad with the Outrage offered to her Honour, expresses her self in so becoming a manner, and in Terms so Natural, no body but would believe the words her own. And that happens, because the Truth of the thing drawing with it the Probability of Words founded upon it, gives them part of those colours that then must pass for true. Are Ambassadors accused of Falshood, that express themselves more elegantly than their Instructions: And the Letters of a Secretary of State, do they cease to be true, and the Prince's, because they are more enlarged, and in better Terms, than in the Original?

'Tis then a Calumny, to say the Truth of History is violated by the Resemblance in *Harangues*. And the Injury goes yet further, for this Retrenchment must be likewise made in *Judgments*, *Reflections* and *Conjectures*, that are Parts so Essential to History, she ceases to be when they are taken from her.

*Livy,*

*Livy, Tacitus* and *Quintus Curtius*, are not only accused for having laid aside Truth, but Probability, in lending more Wit, Politeness and Eloquence, to those they make speak, than the Genius of their Country and Manners of their Age will bear. It must be answered, That Sense and good Wit are the Growth of every Country, and all Ages: That *Scythia* has had her *Philosophers* as well as *Greece*: And at this time the *Canadins*, notwithstanding the Barrenness of their Soil, are born *Eloquent* and *Haranguers*, and have a Natural Rhetorick, as figured and Sententious, as that we are taught in Schools and Books.

Besides, The *Poets*, so great Observers of Resemblance and Probability, never thought it adviseable to change the *Stile* as they change the *Persons*. There is but *Plautus* that pleases himself with playing the *Trivelin*, as one may say, in affecting such an odd unusual Method. But if we believe *Horace*,

*Plautus* was, in the time of *Augustus*, what *Clopinell* is now. All others are equal and uniform throughout, the Servants in *Terence* speak as good *Latin* as their *Masters*; the *Shepherds* and *Shepherdesses* in *Theocritus*, expresse themselves agreeably and with Wit: Nay, his *Polypheme*, Monstrous as he is, has something Gallant. And if the *Criticks* in the time of *Virgil*, reproached his *Corridon* for a rustick word; what had they done his *Dido*, *Anna* and *Jarbas*, if he had lent them the Barbarous Thoughts and Language of *Africk*. Let this be said, not only to justifie the *Eloquence* of the *Scythians* in *Quintus Curtius*, but the *Politeness* of the *Shepherds* in *Virgil*, *Sannazara*, *Tasso*, *Guarinus* and the *Marques d'Urse*, and the fine Thoughts, generous and tender Passions, I have attributed to the *Saracens*, that make the principal *Figures* in my *St. Louis*.

But

But for what end so long a Discourse, The Example of all the *Historians*, leave no place for Excuse: We have in *Greek* and *Latin* Collections of their *Harangues*, as the most Pure and Fine Part of their Wit. And to take the Opinion of *Raymund Lully*, and others, upon the Practise of these Great Men, would be to take the Judgment of a *Colour-seller* upon the *Pictures* of *Fountain-bleau*, and the *Roof* of *Val de Grace*. *Harangues* must then remain in History, but in the place and form they ought, not to embarrass, burden, and be troublesome.

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## C H A P. III.

*What Persons ought to Harangue ?  
 What ought to be the Subject Mat-  
 ter and Measure of Harangues ?  
 Thucydides and Salust reprehended  
 for having fail'd in this Rule.*

THE Historian that will be Curious in the Fitness and Regularity of his *Harangues*, must above all have regard to the Age, Quality, Credit, and Desert, of those he makes speak. It must be otherwise here than in a *Comedy*, where the *Vallet* has his turn as well as the Master. And 'tis not much, *Princes, Statesmen, Captains* or *Ambassadors*, have right to be heard, because the most *Subtile Extracts* of *Policy* are ordinarily in *Harangues*: And an Officer of the Wardrobe, a Life Guard-Man, or a Clerk of the Palace, that would appear Men of Importance, would  
 make



make in History as base an Incongruity, as could be made in Grammar.

Secondly, He must not employ his Rhetorick throughout, but only upon Occasions, and *Matters* that have wherewithall to sustain it. Times of Battel were heretofore proper for *Harangues*, but now that Fashion is almost out of Date; and the Forwardness of the Soldiers Courage, leaves little room for the Captains Eloquence.

*Consultations*, where are treated of Peace and War, Alliance or League, Abdication or Election of a Prince, Examples of Justice or Clemency, and the like Affairs of great Account, are proper places for *Harangues*; but to use them upon the Death of a Foot-Captain, Preparation of a Hunting-bout, or the Attack of a Barn, is to abuse *Rhetorick*, and spend a great many fine words to no purpose. Such *Harangues* would be like those made in the Senate before the Emperor,

about the Seasoning of a *Turbut* of extraordinary size, if *Juvenal* may be credited.

*Thucydides* and *Salust*, though so great Men, and both Chiefs of their Order, are reproached with having fail'd in this Rule: The one in a long Mournful Harangue made by *Pericles* at the Funeral of Fifteen Gentlemen that died in the Service of the Republick; was not this to expose the second *Jupiter* of the *Athenians* (so *Pericles* was called) to abuse his Lightnings and Thunders, employing them in so mean a Matter. But the *Historian* lending his words to the *Orator*, would make it appear he was not less one than the other, and that his Eloquence was able to make as much noise in Writing, as the other had done with his Voice. However the Funeral of Fifteen Soldiers might have been made with less Expence, and the Mournful Oration better employ'd at the Obsequies of those *Athenians* lost in Sicily

in

in greater Numbers and with greater Glory. But *Pericles* was then Dead, and there was never another *Orator*, to whom the *Historian* could lend his Eloquence.

The *Latins* have not been more Regular in this than the *Greeks*: *Salust* Harangues throughout, and almost every where without occasion. In the Conspiracy of *Cataline*, the long *Harangues* Obscure and Contract too much the Narration; and in his *Jugurthin* War, the great Discourse made by *Memius* Tribune of the People, without any other Reason than the Reputation of the Man for one of the best Speakers of his Time, makes it plain enough he takes all Occasions, right or wrong, to make Satisfaction by his Historick Eloquence, for the ill Success of his *Oratorian*.

Let the *Historian* then take for a Third Rule, in Composition of *Harangues*, to avoid Multitude and Length; by which the Narration is broken, the Reader retarded and  
put

put out of his way, as by Hedges and Ditches in the Road of a Traveller that hasts to his Journeys end. There is no Labour more Ungrateful, nor more Unhappy, no words worse employ'd, and they are declined by all as infected places. And if heretofore a Gallant Man chose rather a Prison, than give his Approbation to an ill Poem; those may be found, that think the *Gallies* more Supportable than the reading such *Harangues*.

*Boccalin* is very pleasant in his Occurrences of *Parnassus*, and makes appear the Pain suffered in this kind of Lecture: He tells you, That an Old Man being found reading a *Madrigal* under a Laurel-Tree with his Spectacles on, 'twas judg'd by the Senate a Scandalous thing, and he condemn'd by universal Consent to the reading an *Harangue* in *Guiccardin*. Since they have been made shorter even in *France*, where they were altogether as troublesome.

In the Fourth place, He must not forget *Aristotle's* Rule, that *Harrangues* made to be read, require more Art and Study in their Composition, than those to be spoke. And likewise this Study ought not to be that of a *Sophist*, to beat about the Bush and smoothe a Period; this Art not to be placed in Affectations of Points, Antitheses, and such-like Figures, that are but to say the *Coequetaries* of *Rhetorick*: All there ought to be Grave, and accommodated to the Condition of Persons, and Qualities of Affairs. And if Agreeableness, so much recommended by the Masters of this Art, demands Application throughout, in this place more particularly. For a King to speak like a Sophist, a Captain like a Declamator, an Ambassador to deliver his Credentials in Points, would make strange Figures: They might as well go to Council, Battel and Audience, in the *Habits* of *Comedians*.

*Pathetick*

*Pathetick Characters and Passionate Movements* have also their place in *Historical Haranguers*, but they must come naturally, and without Violence. The Subject and Occasion bring them in, nor are they to enter with the Noise and Tumult they make in Oratorical Actions, where they are as Thunders and Lightnings in a Cloud big with Tempests. *Historick Eloquence*, that speaks but from the Pen, has no Voice nor Behaviour, must be more Calm and Reserv'd. And 'tis not in the Closet, and upon Paper, is expected Thunder-bolts and Storms, like those this second *Jupiter* of the *Athenians* made in the Assembly of the People. I will not further enlarge upon the other Riches, that belong to the Composition of *Harangues*, 'twould be a return to the College, and In-croachment upon the Profession of *Cicero* and *Quintilian*, that have given long Lessons for them.



## C H A P. IV.

Of the Kinds, Use and End of Digressions.

**D**igressions have the last place in the Parts of *History*, but I cannot see for what Right, or Reason, this last place is given them. Where they are absent, there is no Want; and where found, many times Troublesome. *Livy* has avoided them with Honour; *Polybius* and *Salust* abridg'd them to their Reputation. Those who would have *Digression* to *History*, as an *Episode* to *Poetry*, know neither one nor the other. A Poem without an *Episode*, is but the Carcass of a Poem; Whereas there is nothing wanting to an *History* without *Digression*. To what would they reduce the *Aeneids*, if the Sack of *Troy*, the Loves of *Dido* and *Aeneas*, the Description of *Hell*, and other *Episodes*, which are as the Porticoes, Galleries, and

and Anti-chambers, to a Palace, were taken from her? And what would the History of *Tacitus* lose, if that long and fabulous Digression of the Worship and Temple of the Goddess of *Cyprus*; and that other longer of the Original and Religion of the Jews, fill'd with Falsity and Malice, were retrench'd? Notwithstanding the Esteem I have for him, and the Pleasure I take in his Entertainment, as often as he comes to them, I profess my self tired, and all I can obtain of my Patience, is to attend till he has done.

But since it so pleases the Masters, let us suffer Digressions in History, and say, for Instruction to those that desire them, they are either *Geographical, Historical, Political* or *Moral*. In *Geographical*, The Author gives the Description of some Country he finds in his way: Such, in the *Jugurthin* War, is that of *Africk*. In *Historical*, is recited some particular Adventure; as that of the two Friends that *Salust* speaks of

of in the same place ; or in the Original of some State, People or Town ; the two Digressions of *Tacitus*, that I have mentioned, are of this kind. In *Political*, is given Instruction to Princes, Statesmen and Officers ; there are Examples in *Polybius* of every sort : And this may be said without saying too much, That in the Republick of *Plato*, and Politicks of *Aristotle*, there are Maxims and Axioms have less of Policy than in this History. In the *Moral*, the Historian gives Lessons upon Vertue and Vice, a Good and Evil Life, and the Consequences of one and the other. *Salust* gives an Example in the long Digression he makes in his *Cataline*, of the Birth, Progress and Fall of the Republick : And though he is full of Spirit, Rules and Sentences, he takes up too much space in so little a Work : And it may be said in that place, the Historian does like a tired Traveller, that having but one days Journey to go, stays two at the first Inn he meets with.

with. All these Rules, all these Sentences, received under the name of *Fabius* and *Cato*, lose their Force and Edge under that of *Salust*.

Let the *Historian* then remember, not to make unnecessary Digressions, which serve not to dress, clear, or sustain his Matter; and that those he does make, are very rare and short. Otherwise, being but Resting-places, as *Livy* calls them, or Inns as others, he will be reproach'd with making more Rests than Way, and as many Inns as Rests.

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Dissertation VIII.Of Order.

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## C H A P. I.

*Of the Preface ; Rules to be observ'd,  
and Faults to be avoided. Re-  
flections upon the Prefaces of  
Salust.*

**I**T is not enough the Architect  
has Marble and Stones, and the  
Art to work them, he must  
yet know the Placing, Building and  
Connexion they require. Without  
that, he will put that below that  
should be above, that behind that  
should be before ; and in lieu of a  
Palace, make a Monster of Stone,  
as

as the *Italian Architects* say. This Knowledge of Order and Placing, is not less necessary for the Historian, if that be wanting, his richest Materials, ill joyn'd or ill placed, will be but as Heaps of Stone without Mortar, Connexions, Symmetry and Form. But as there remains but two Pieces to dispute and place, the *Preface* and *Narration*, the Disposition, so necessary, cannot be difficult.

He will begin then by a Preface, which is to him as a Prelude to those that play upon the *Theorbo* or *Violin*; by that he prepares the Mind and Affection of the Reader, and disposes him to a continued and favourable Attention. Let him not follow the Example of *Cesar*, that has no Preface at the Front of his *Commentaries*. History is a more finished Structure, has Body, Parts, Proportion and Measure, according to Art; and to a Building of this Nature, there must be other Skill and Order than in *Commen-*

*-taries*



*tares* and *Memoirs*, that are but as a Mass of Materials waiting for the Hand of the Workman. The *Louvre*, though so Magnificent and Great, offends the Light, and baulks the Imagination, by its yet want of a Portal: And a History, though composed by *Livy* or *Tacitus*, would not less offend those that see it without a Preface: *Lucian* says, such Works are Bodies without a Head.

But whether we take her for a Portal or Head, she is not left to the Fancy of the Workman: She has her Rules, that must not be violated; without doing contrary to the *Rudiments of History*. She must be rightly adapted, of just Measure, Modest and Conformable to the rest of the Body. One cannot, says *Horace*, without Laughing, see the *Head of a Man upon the Neck of a Horse*, and it would be as Extravagant to see a Horse's Head upon a Man's Shoulders. Such-like Representations,  
are

are only fit for Signs to those odd Animals exposed in a Fair. And there is nothing more resembles those Monsters, than a History that begins with a common Preface, not immediately relating to the Subject, but would serve as well a *Spanish* as a *French Narration*; as proper to the Wars of *Solyman*, as those of *Charles the Fifth*. *Salust*, that *Roman Antiquity* proposes for one of her most perfect Models, is fallen willfully, and seeing his Fault, into this Incongruity. He begins his *History* of the *Conspiracy of Catalin* and the *Jugurthin War*, by two *Moral Declamations*, which belong as little to their Subjects, as a Doctors Cap to a Soldier. 'Tis possible they were the Remains of his Oratorical Profession, and he thought it better to place them there, whatever ill Figure they might make, than to lose them.

Whatever *Salust* might mean, besides that these two Prefaces have

have as little to do in the places they are put, as any other; they are not of right Measure. And it may be said, That being so long as they are, they make there the same Figure, to use *Lucian's* Comparison, as the Head of a *Colossus* upon the Body of a Dwarf. The Historian must have a care of this second Fault; his Preface must be short and close, especially before Histories of little Bulk: And if he does not prefer the vain Reputation of Eloquence, to the Prejudice of his Judgment, he must not do as that Architect who made the Entrance of a Chappel large enough for a Cathedral Church.

Above all, let him avoid *Ostentation* and *Pride*, that more becomes a Captain in a Comedy, than the Wisdom of an Historian, from whom is expected more Modesty and Gravity than any other Writer. By that he will gain the Good Will of his Reader, make him more Favourable and Antidate against the

the Venom Envy carries in her Eyes and Tongue. And his Modesty will obtain that Indulgence from the Criticks, would never have been allowed to his Quality or Merit. On the contrary, The softest Natures are exasperated, the Charitable not less than the Envious, the Doves as well as the Serpents, have their Gaul, and turn their Beaks and Claws against those that force them. And the Work, whatever Merit it may otherwise have, will suffer the Chastisement due to the Presumption of the Workman. 'Tis yet worse, when the Desert does not support this Presumption; when in lieu of Marble and Jaspar that was expected, is placed coarse unpolish'd Stuff; and a Country Cottage in the room of a Palace: Such things are not to be endured, and no body but would Laugh at the Extravagance, to speak after *Lucian*, of Armour made with Osier and Bark of Trees,

Trees, under a Gilded Head-piece.

The *Historian* must begin then with Modesty, and double it when he speaks himself; do it in such a manner, the Ink and Paper, if it were possible, should blush with him. And this hinders not his speaking Magnificently of his Matter, if deserv'd, because 'tis not his own making. He may praise it with the same Modesty a Sculptor does his Marble: This will be a Spur to the Curiosity and Attention of his Reader, and a Preservative against the Trouble and Wearisomness, as ordinary in long Lectures as long Voyages.

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## C H A P. II.

*The Historick Narration requires Order. What is this Order; and how it differs from that of Poetry.*

**T**HE Historian ought not to pass from one Preface to another, as some have done, that were to build *Portal* upon *Portal*, *Threshold* upon *Threshold*, and two *Heads* upon one *Body*. He must enter his Relation, and follow it with an equal Composure, without Interruption, and according to the *Order of Events and Time*. This *Order* is one thing in *History*, another in *Journals* and *Annals*: In *Journals* the Method is to follow the Accidents of a Day: In *Annals* of a Year. *History* is not so much confin'd, though she is obliged to observe Time, and go hand in hand with it: She is not so tyed, that she cannot sometimes



times free her self, and follow the Course and Events of Affairs.

This Method of sometimes following, and sometimes leaving Time, presupposes the Distinction of two Orders founded upon the Doctrine of *Aristotle* and *Horace*. Of these two Orders, says the Masters, the one is Natural, the other Artificial. By the first, things are conducted equally, and with the same course, from the beginning to the end: By the second, they go and stop by Intervals, as the Writer pleases, that one while shews, another hides; sometimes leads strait, then through by-ways, to raise the Curiosity of the Reader, and keep up Desire and Attention. This second Order, is that ought to be kept in Fabulous Structures, as are *Poems* and *Romances*. *Homer* has given the first Example in *Greek*, *Virgil* the second in *Latin*, *Tasso* the third in *Italian*. And if it be permitted to name my self after these great Artists, I have

given the Fourth in *French* in my *St. Louis*.

An *Historian* that is the Servant of Truth, and labours to establish her, has nothing to do with this Art of Disguising and Imposture; the natural Order is what she demands: And because it may be taken from the Chain of things together, and their relation to time, the *Historian* is free to chuse which he thinks most open, least engaged, least subject to embarrass, and most proper to make entrance for his Matter in the Memory of the Reader.

There is yet some difference to be made between *Universal History* of many *States* and *Nations*, without Relation, without Dependence one upon the other; and particular but of one State, Nation or Reign. In the *Universal*, the Order of Time must accompany the Order of Places, and the *Historian* avoid following *Ariosto*, and other Architects of Irregular Fables;

Fables; that without Vessels, or Wings, and what is worse, Example; without Need or Subject, boldly cross the Seas, and pass in a Moment from one Pole to the other. And whilst you are most attentive to something Strange that is done in *France* or *Spain*, you are carried from thence of a sudden into *Asia* or *Africk*. He must give himself leasure, as much as the time will permit, to finish what he has begun in one Country, before he goes into another. *Herodotus*, *Diodorus* of *Sicily*, *Justin*, and others who have undertaken *Universal Histories*, have held this Method; and their Example, is a Rule for all those that would after them enter this vast Tract.

*Particular History* gives no such Fatigues, nor obliges to make such long Journies: She is shut up in one Country, from whence she is not permitted to stir, without some Necessity draws her;

there she adjusts, as near as possible, the Course of things to that of time; but without tying herself to the Calender, without keeping Register of the Days or Years: When Events are so measured, and go so just, that the Years keep equal pace with them, she follows regularly this Exactness, that serves much to the Placing, Understanding and Measure of things; but when it happens they pass from one Year to the succeeding, the Composure of the Narration broken, and put off till another time, troubles the Matter, and makes Confusion in the Eyes of the Reader; then she conducts to the place where the Narration began, and lets time go on till she finds an Opportunity to overtake and rejoyne him. *Livy, Quintus Curtius* and *Tacitus* have done after this manner; and in this they will be followed by all Lovers of good Order and

Oeco-

Oeconomy; and who would avoid the like Confusion *Thucydides* fell into, willing to adjust too scrupulously the Periods of his *History* to those of the *Sun*.

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## Dissertation IX.

*Of the Stile of History.*

## C H A P. I.

*The Stile of History demands Ornament.*

**T**Here remains but the *Stile* to be treated of, which is to *History* as Cloaths are to the Body : And to the end a Method may be held in this last Part, I will remass all that can be said of it in five or six Conclusions, grounded upon Authority, Reason and Example.

*History* admits nothing mean in her *Stile*, nothing Negligent or Vulgar : She must have Politeness, Adjust-



Adjustment and Dress: So says *Aristotle*, That Compositions to be read, ought to be wrought with more Curiosity and Study, than those to be spoke. 'Tis likewise *Cicero's* Opinion, who tells us the *Sophist* is allied to the *Historian*, and that the Stile of one and the other is almost the same. *Hermogenes* also ranks in the same kind the Stile of *History* and that of a *Panegyrick*. And none that has heard speak of *Sophists*, and *Makers* of *Panegyricks*, can be Ignorant of the Magnificence of those People, and the Care they take for Ornament and Dress.

But if *Aristotle*, *Cicero*, *Hermogenes*, and the rest, had not recommended Dress, and what is proper for *History*, her Dignity, Employ, and the Quality of Persons she serves, would demand it. She is one of the noblest Productions of Humane Wit; and Nobility is every where remark'd by it. 'Tis what distinguishes Palaces from

Private Houses; and Gentlemen from the Vulgar : She is designed to instruct the Great; and the Governour of a Prince ought to be otherwise cloathed than a Petty School-master : All her Discourses are with Kings, Statesmen and Generals : And 'tis not seemly to appear in slovenly old Cloaths amongst such Company.

I add, A Negligent Use of them without Artifice, has little alluring : They must be adjusted, and well put on, to cause Observation. In Houses, Gardens and Garments, a bare Covering does not suffice : And how Profitable soever *History* may be, her Life will be but short, if she has not some Agreement to preserve her from the Outrage of Time. Above sixteen hundred Years *Salust*, *Livy*, *Tacitus*, *Quintus Curtius*, and more of the same Age, have lived with Honour, and been magnificently lodg'd, and richly cloathed; whilst others that knew not the Art to please, have been eaten

eaten by Worms and Rats in the corners they were thrown into.

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## C H A P. II.

*What ought to be the Ornament of the Stile of History ; and in what it consists.*

**T**HE *Stile of History* must be adorned ; but every sort of *Ornament* is not proper for her. The Dress must be applied to Ages , Conditions and Employs. A Plume of Feathers in the Hat of a Captain, has another *mien*, than in the Cap of a President : And what would become a Girl, would be very ill placed upon her Mother. Though Youth be the Spring of Life, and by consequence the time of Dress , a Young Person must not be seen every day by all in the same Habit : 'Tis the same in the Matter

Matter we are speaking of, History demands *Ornament*, but not that of a *Ball* or *Theatre*. It must be Ornament of Ceremony, and Holy-days, Serious, Grave and Modest; and she would be as ill deck'd up in the Locutions and Figures of *Apuleius*, as if a Grave Lady should go to Church in the Habit of a Comedian.

This Ornament then (to say something particular) must not be that of a Country-Wedding, where the new-married Wife is covered all over with Tinsel; 'tis made principally of three things, *Elegance of Words*, *Just Disposition*, and certain *Light from Sentences and Figures*, that shine and give *Eclat* to the Composure of the *Stile*. *Words* are Elegant, that are not of too old or too new a Fabrick; that are receiv'd by Men of Worth, and breath not the common Air. *Disposition* contributes to their Elegancy, when they have Number and Measure, that make a Harmony

mony the Ignorant are not capable of. As to *Sentences*, having already discoursed of them, it will be enough to say here, they require Management, where there appears more *Oeconomy* than *Want*. But to shew them to the Reader by certain Marks placed in the Margent, as if afraid they should not be taken notice of, besides the Affectation and Pedantry, is to give Value to ill Wine by the Sign.

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## C H A P. III.

*That the Sublime Character is most proper for the Stile of History.*

**T**HE *Sublime Character*, that is to say, the most elevated way of Writing, is of all the most proper for the *Historick Stile*: 'Tis the Opinion of all the Masters, and amongst others *Hermogenes*, as Severe as Judicious a Critick, would

would have an Historian approach as near as possible to that of *Plato's*, that *Greece* acknowledged for the most Lofty of any; the *Muses* also presided in his Academy, and were there adored. And if Verse and Fable were taken from *Homer*, he would not be found more a Poet than this Philosopher. *Thucydides* the Patron of Greek History, form'd himself after this Model: All the Latins of Reputation have followed him; and this Proposition is not less founded upon Reason, than Authority and Example.

Every one knows the Stile is as the Cloaths, and Representation as well of Things as Thoughts; and that there ought to be Proportion and Agreement between the Cloaths and the Body, the Representation and Thing represented; That a Childs Coat is not made for a Man, nor *Colossus's* and Gyants represented by Children. We have said, and 'tis agreed, that nothing ought to enter History but great Things,  
noble



noble Actions, and high Enterprises: The Rule of Proportions then and Agreements, will have the Stile with which these Things, Actions and Enterprises are to be cloathed or represented, should accord with their Grandeur and Exaltation. An *Historian* that is to represent (for Example) the *Batteries* raised against *Rochel*, and the *Englisb* embark'd to Succor it; that has to describe the *Weather*, *Alps* and *Savoy*, overcome by the late King to the Walls of *Susa*, would be very Ridiculous to express himself as if he were speaking of a Building made with Cards, or the Attack of a Paper Castle.

Let us therefore advise the Writer to try his Strength, and see if he is in the Number of those exalted Spirits, for whom Nature has made nothing too high, nor of too great an Extent: Whether he has a Fund, from whence he can draw wherewithall to carve Images of the greatest Grandeur. If he has  
nothing

nothing of all this, can but crawl upon the Earth, and work in little, let him leave to others *History*, that is to be the Instruction of Kings and Princes, and satisfy himself as much as he pleases with writing *Chronicles* and *Legends*. It was said by a great Cardinal, rich in Expressions, That it belonged not to Barbers to play upon the Lute, Beggars to eat Melons, nor Pedants to read *Virgil*: It may be added, Nor those that want the Quill of an Eagle to write *History*.

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## C H A P. IV.

*That the Stile of History ought to approach that of Poetry ; and to what Degree.*

THE *Stile of History* ought to approach that of *Poetry*, as much as possible for *Prose*, without exceeding the Bounds that separate them. This Conclusion is founded upon what has been said of their Alliance, and confirm'd by all the Masters, who will have *History* (as I have said before) a *Poem* free from the Confinement of *Versification*, a *Poem* on foot: And if I am permitted to repeat a word worth all has been said, *A Poem in full Song without Musick*. Now the resemblance between *History* and *Poetry*, that *Agathias* calls *Sisters*, not arising from the Matter feign'd in one, and true in the other, nor from Disposition Natural

tural in the one, and Artificial in the other, it must necessarily arise from the *Stile*.

'Tis for that *Dion. Halicar.* believes he Honours *Thucydides* and *Herodotus*, where he gives their Histories the name of Excellent and Delicate *Poems*. And in another place, expressing himself like a Master upon this Doctrine, he condemns in History a Slovenly ill-comb'd *Stile*: These are his words, *And would have her have one studied, approaching the Poetick.* All the *Latins* of the first Rank, have not been less Curious in this than the *Greeks*. And *Pontin*, a worthy and ingenious Writer, has taken great Pleasure in comparing many places of *Virgil*, with the like in *Salust* and *Livy*, where Verse excepted, the Poet is not more so, than these two *Historians*. And there are places enough, where *Tacitus* otherwise so Serious, and sometimes so Chagrin, forgets the Gravity of his Office, and takes upon him

him the *Enthusiasm* of an *Heroick Poet*.

But the *Historian* must have a care of deceiving himself, and know the Permission given *History* of coming near to *Poetry*, is not a bold License without reserve. There are *Locutions* and *Figures* he must avoid with as much care, as a *Vertuous Woman* abstains all things that offend her *Modesty*. What would be thought of a *History* beginning in these Terms, *The Hours that attend upon the Sun*, had not as yet opened the *Gates of Heaven*: Or thus, *Aurora* had not as yet appeared in the *Balcony of Laque and Azure*, placed upon the *Portico of the Palace of Day*: Or by these words, *The Fiery-footed Coursers that draw the Chariot of the Sun*, were still in the *Ocean*, and the *Beautiful Driver* had not as yet put on their *Harnass of Gold and Rubies*: And all this to express it was not yet day: People would laugh at such a *Luxury of Speech*, such a *Magni-*

Magnificence of words ill placed :  
 And what would be an Ornament  
 and Rich in Poetry, would pass  
 but for a *Turlupinade* in History.  
 There is here then a Distinction  
 to be made between Defect and  
 Excess, a Draght and a Flood :  
 Some would have the Composure  
 of History low and mean like *Legends*;  
 others would have her have  
 the *Theban* and *Pharſalian Heat*  
 and *Enthusiasm* : But the one allows  
 not enough, the other too much ;  
 the middle way must be held, and  
*Lucian's Rule* observed.

In the *Historick Character*, he distinguishes a *Sentence* from the *Stile* ;  
 and this presupposed, he permits  
 a *Sentence* (chiefly in certain Descriptions  
 that have something great) to make use of this Heat,  
 to follow the Gale of Poetry, and ride on  
 Horse-back, so he expresses himself :  
 But to the *Stile* he gives no such Liberty,  
 recommends Reservedness and Modesty,  
 and forbids Words and Expressions that look  
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like *Possession*. He will have her go after a *Sentence*, not on Horse-back behind her but on Foot, and holding her Stirrups: These are yet his Words; and by these, according to his manner, always great and figured, he represents the *Medium* ought to be held by the *Historian* between the *Orator* and *Poet*.

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## C H A P. V.

*The Historick Stile demands Pureness and Clearness.*

LET the *Ornament* be what it will, with which the *Stile* of *History* is adorned, she will not have all the Grace she ought, if she has not three Qualities, *Purity*, *Clarity* and *Brevity*, in every thing. What is free from Mixture is called *Pure*; and the *Stile* of History

story will be such, when it has nothing Strange or Barbarous; of another Time or Place, Usage or Mode; and that all the Rules of Grammar are observed. This *Purity*, whether writ or spoke, expresses a Person of Quality, and it cannot be wanted, without being taxed with lowness of Birth or ill Breeding.

'Tis of this *Pureness* our French *Theophrast* Monsieur de la Chamber must be understood, when he would have (as he has often told me) History writ in the Style of certain little *Romances*, that have lately appeared under the Title of *Novels*. As he has not less Esteem for *Thucydides* and *Livy*, than *Aristotle* and *Hippocrates*; I am well assured he would not be the first to accuse them for having ill employ'd the Treasure of their Wit, and it would be without doubt to accuse them to rob History of the Ornaments they have given her, and reduce her to I know not what sort

sort of Purity, without Colour, Relish and Force.

He cannot be Ignorant (who is of the first Rank of *Philosophers*) that the *Forms* must differ according to the difference of the *Matter*. That the Materials of a lofty History, being different from that of a little Love-Story, the way of working them must also be diverse. 'Tis with the Purity of the Style, as with the Property of the Habit, it may be eomly throughout, but requires the same Adjustment and Care in all places. That that would be too much for *Sylvia* or *Amarillis*; would be too little for *Semiramis* or *Cleopatra*. And who dares maintain, the Style that suffices a Letter, Love-Declaration, or other Trifle of that nature, can admit, the Harangue of a General encouraging his Soldiers to Fight; or the Head of a Faction inciting a Mutiny; a Statesman giving his Opinion of the Consequence of War or Peace; or the Description of

of a Battle, Sedition, Sack of a Town, Burning or Shipwrack of a whole Fleet: Such things must be expressed in other Terms, than the Despair of *Celadon*, or Complaints of *Astrea*.

I will give you an Example, The great Doctor in the Art of Loving, who said every Lover was a Soldier, and Love, as well as *Mars*, had his Camps and Armies; yet knew the Trumpet was as little proper for the one, as the Flagalet for the other. Besides he never spoke of War, but in Terms High and Magnifick; nor of Love, but in Words Soft and Smooth to the last Degree of Delicacy. And though his Stile be every where Pure, and his Locution *Roman* throughout, yet when he has in his Metamorphose, the Chaos or Deluge under his Hand, when he is to describe the Birth of the World, the Combats of Gyants, the Universal Shipwrack of Mankind, he expresses himself with quite another Force; without

without leaving his Purity, speaks in quite another Tone, than he does in his *Elegies* and *Love-Epistles*.

This, to Interpret our Dear and Knowing Friend, who as a great Lover and Artist in the Pureness of a Stile, would be but understood, that of all Ornaments he most esteemed Purity. We esteem it as much as he, and I am sure he intends with us it ought to be accompanied with the Force, Dignity and Elevation the Nobleness of History demands.

Let us proceed to *Clearness*, which is the second Quality required in the *Stile* of *History*. It may be made by the neatness of Words, that ought to be all Intelligible, and placed in so good Order, as not to evade, hinder or trouble the Understanding of the Reader, from joyning with that of the Writer, and taking all the Fineness of his Thoughts. It may be made in the second place more Advantageously, and in a more Noble Manner, by

L

certain

certain Lights that pass from the Intellect of the Author to his Imagination, and penetrating the Images they there find, carry them bright as they are into his Stile; from whence they easily reflect by the Sight or Hearing into the Understanding, according to the Capacity of those that Hear or Read. This sort of Clearness is the most Graceful and Esteemed, but very Rare, and comes but from some Illuminated Wits of the first Rate, that enlighten their Works by their own proper Lustre, and hold the same Order and Rank as the *Planets* amongst the *Stars*.

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## C H A P. VI.

*That the Stile of History demands Brevity : And in what it ought to consist.*

**T**Here remains but *Brevity*, that is a great Agreement to History, and a great Charm to the Reader : But how few know in what this agreeable Shortness consists; many place it in the Management and Sparing of words, and persuade themselves, that to write in few, is to be short. Not knowing there are *Madrigals* of six Verses, longer than *Poems* of twelve thousand. *Harangues* of a quarter of an Hour, shorter than some *Complements* of four Lines. Others establish it in a cut or broken Stile, that is, without Band or Connexion, that falls and rises, begins and finishes in every Line. Father *Matthew* has given the first

Example of this manner of Writing and Speaking by Bits ; and as ill Examples are usually most followed , this *Jargon* was in Mode during the Minority of the late King. And a certain Soldier of *Rovergue* or *Perygort* was made Publick with the Language of a Frantick ; and put himself at the Head of a Band of such who thought to give themselves Honour by a Madness like his. When the *Hercules* of *Seneca* , and *Orlando* of *Ariosto* , as Furious as they are represented, speak better Sence than those People. And the *Corribantes* of the Ancients, when the Wine had turned their Heads, play'd the Extravagants more reasonably and with more Followers. But my Wonder is, *Malvezzi* , otherwise so Worthy a Man, and others of his Country , should pass the *Alps* and come into *France* , on purpose to take this Infection.

This *Brevity* then we search after, is not made by Hashing of *Sentences*,

tences, and maiming of Words. And those that take *Salust* and *Tacitus* for Patrons, are mistaken, and chose those that condemn them. For though in some Descriptions, where these great Men affecting to make haste, they serve themselves with some Infinitives without Con-junctive Particles, a Privilege their Language gives them; yet in all the rest their Stile is conformable to the Masters Rules, that will have it go roundly and with an equal Course; like that of a River, without stop or turning by the Declen-tion of the Canal. On the other side, As *History* is a *Structure*, she demands Order and Connexion as all other Buildings; and her Mate-rials without that, would make but a tumultuous Heap of Sand without Lime.

There are others that place *Bre-vity* in *Constraint*, and think they are short whenever they *pinch* them-selves in; when they have remass'd many things in few Words. These

deceive themselves, if they would have the Shoe less than the Foot, and the Habit too strait for the Body; for thereby the Foot becomes not more Noble, nor the Body better shap'd. But from being better made, or more at their Ease, they find themselves lam'd, and suffer the Torture. Every thing has its Measure, and whether above, or below this Measure, as there is neither Agreement nor Harmony, so no Beauty nor Pleasure must be sought after, but what arises from it.

This *Brevity*, where the *Matter* is shortned, as Hangings folded up, and Beds piled one upon another in a Wardrobe; is not the Shortness History requires; she permits not things to be hid, and shewn by pieces; will neither have them too much extended, nor too closely press'd, without being lamed or dislocated; that spoils the Figure, and offends the Sight. And 'tis in this properly consists the *Historick Shortness*, to expose nothing that  
may

may be suppressed without Injury to the Subject; to Suppress nothing that belongs to the Integrity or Beauty of it; not to take off the Sight, till every thing has the Extension it demands; to remember that never so little added, though but a Line, is a Volume. This is the Opinion of all the Masters, of *Cicero*, who allows a Narration its *Agreement*: And the Sight alone, (without Reason) teaches us, there is no Beauty where there is want of Extension, and things heaped are in disorder; of *Quintilian*, that condemns the Leanness and Driness of a Narration, and declares, That what is not of just Measure, is but Confusion; of *Plato* that tells us, Shortness and Length have no Merit in themselves; and not the most short, but what is best must be chosen.

I will finish by these Oracles, not so Equivocal or Deceitful as those of *Delph*: Nor can I add any thing will give greater Value, or end this  
Treatise

Treatise with an Authority of greater Weight or better Esteem. However I will not quit my Pen, till I have again acquainted the Reader, that what I have said of the Historian, I have said of a Man not yet born, nor will not appear, but in that Year that discovers the Perpetual Motion, and Philosophers Stone.

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F I N I S.

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